

WOMEN CANDIDATES AND COUNCILLORS IN
ENGLISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

by

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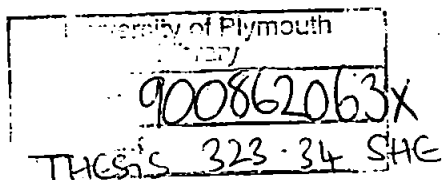
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Abstract: Women candidates and councillors in English local government.

By Mary Bernadette Shears

Research interest in gender and politics has been increasing in the UK and internationally. Much of this research has focussed on the issues surrounding women's under-representation to national elected office. However, a vital part of the picture has been largely ignored – women's under-representation in local government. This is surprising given that so many MPs still cite experience of serving on local councils before embarking on a career in national politics. This thesis aims to fill some important gaps in our knowledge of the situation affecting the under-representation of women in local government in England.

It is known that women are under-represented across the whole of local government. This research presents evidence from local council elections to show the differences that exist between and among different types of local authority. New information about the type of people who stand for local election is provided from the Local Election Candidate Survey. This is the first time that candidates and councillors have featured simultaneously in a national survey. Their motivations for standing, opinions about the selection process and campaign experience are examined in detail. Semi-structured interviews with some of these candidates provide more in-depth detail about the individual experience of standing for election and being a councillor.

The research findings are of interest to local authorities and political parties as they attempt to respond to policies designed to encourage the recruitment of a wider cross-section of society to local councils. The findings should assist national government initiatives by examining the extent to which the level and success of women's recruitment is a function of endogenous and/or exogenous factors. This research will be relevant to the broader investigation of recruitment to political office, the majority of which is restricted to national elections and thereby fails to take account of the importance of local factors as impediments or catalysts for political careers.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 *Background and Context*

Despite the efforts of many that advocate increased representation of women in public life their role in most modern liberal democracies is below what might be expected given their numbers in the population. This is particularly true for women's place as directly elected representatives. There have been few elected women to be Heads of State; their role in Cabinets has been marginal and their numbers low in national legislatures. The UK is no exception, where there has been one woman that has occupied the office of Prime Minister and only two women have been appointed to the three most important offices of state, namely Chancellor of the Exchequer, Home Secretary (Jacqui Smith) and Foreign Secretary (Margaret Beckett). In terms of parliamentary elections, before the breakthrough that took place following the 1997 general election, women were seldom selected and even more rarely elected to the House of Commons. It was not until the 1983 election that women candidates comprised more than 10% of the total candidates. It was not until the 1997 election that women comprised more than 10% of successfully elected candidates.

Understandably, academic research has focussed on the issues surrounding women's under-representation to national elected office, both within the UK and elsewhere. This research has proved valuable in helping to define the nature of the problem affecting women's recruitment to a career in public office and in contributing towards thinking about the ways and means of redressing the imbalances. But a vital part of the picture has been largely ignored – women's under-representation in local government. This is surprising

given that so many MPs still cite experience of serving on local councils before embarking on a career in national politics. Admittedly, with the modern fashion for many parliamentary election candidates to be recruited from within the party political structures, for example, special advisors, members of think-tanks and other organised bodies, the number of MPs that have formerly served as local councillors is lower than it once was. Nevertheless, local government is and will continue to be an integral part of the question about why so few women are successful in pursuing a career in politics.

It is not altogether surprising that the place of local government in the wider scheme of things has been neglected. The paucity of reliable data affecting the outcome of local elections has undermined efforts to investigate this issue properly. Similarly, there has been no national survey of local election candidates unlike the intensive research now undertaken for their counterparts that contest parliamentary elections. Finally, there has been little in-depth examination of the experiences of women candidates to local elected office within the UK, an examination that supplies the detail missed by both aggregate and individual level data analysis. This thesis aims to fill some important gaps in our knowledge of the situation affecting the under-representation of women in local government in England.

As such it addresses directly a number of fundamental research questions that have hitherto been largely neglected:

- What proportion of women have been selected and elected in local elections?
- Why after a period of continual increases in women candidates and councillors has the rate of progress apparently halted such that at the time of writing only 30% of local candidates are women?
- Why do people volunteer to be candidates for local election and are there important and significant differences between the experiences of men and women?
- What are the opinions of present day candidates on the recent attempts to modernise local government?
- And finally, what could be done to redress the current under-representation of women as councillors?

This research is set against a background of renewed government interest in the democratic accountability and representativeness of local councils. In 1997 the newly elected Labour Government proposed various initiatives to modernise local government. One important element of the modernisation agenda was to encourage local councils to improve the social diversity among their elected members. The publication of the 1998 White Paper, "Modern Local Government: in touch with the People", highlighted that various aspects of "the old culture" of local government needed to change in order to improve democratic accountability. One fundamental change was to recognize that, "the current body

of councillors is not representative of the population as a whole, fewer are drawn from ethnic minorities, many more are over 45 and many fewer are women... the general position cannot be healthy for local democracy" (DETR, 1998, Ch 3: 3.59). The report continued by stating the Government's wish to see more employed people, more women and people from ethnic minorities and younger people as councillors. Since that report was published there have been minor improvements in the representativeness of councillors. Although the picture varies considerably amongst local authorities on average fewer than three in ten councillors are women, councillors from ethnic minority backgrounds comprise fewer than one in twenty councillors and the average age of councillors is edging towards 60 years,(I&DeA 2008). Overall, it appears that the intention to improve social diversity has not been realised.

In October 2006 the latest Local Government White Paper entitled, "Strong and Prosperous Communities" was published. This repeated the concerns of prior reports regarding the demographic characteristics of elected representatives. This report outlined some suggested measures to encourage different people to stand for election. There is an acknowledgement that the framework in which local authorities operate can still be a barrier to effective, accountable and responsive government. In particular the difficulties political parties face when recruiting new candidates is recognised. Instances of political parties' successful recruitment of a wider range of candidates in London borough elections are cited as examples of progress. Whilst the under-representation of certain groups within communities has long been a cause for concern, now there seems to be more evidence of political will to implement measures to remedy the

situation. The problem remains, however, that the evidence base for implementing change is flimsy at best. While it is plain to see that women are under-represented across the whole of local government it is not known whether the problem is uniform and affects all local authorities or whether there are some important exceptions to the general rule. An important focus of this research, therefore, lies with presenting the evidence from local council elections and in a more detailed manner than has been possible beforehand. By moving away from the national picture and examining more closely differences that exist between and among different types of local authority we hope to show, for want of a better expression, examples of good and bad practice in the recruitment and election of women to local authorities. By understanding more about the contexts of where women do well (and by the same token, where women do badly) it may be that we can highlight some structural contingencies that affect women's under-representation.

The absence of any reliable individual level survey data also militates against a sober and considered view about what attracts women to stand for local office and whether the difficulties that are faced in getting to this position of standing are different for men and women. Would-be reformers are well intentioned but under informed. The evidence from this research, however, presents new information about the type of people who stand for local elections, their motivations for standing, their opinions about the selection process and campaign experience are examined in detail. This is the first time that candidates and councillors have featured simultaneously in a national survey. Research that has addressed the issue of women's under-representation in national

legislatures has focussed on a number of key areas, including selection procedures, the resources required to embark upon a career in politics and the different obstacles presented to men and women becoming successful. A single national survey of local election candidates could not hope to match the evidence provided there but it is nevertheless a start in the right direction. The survey undertaken in 2006 for this research dissertation has contributed towards successive waves of similar surveys undertaken in 2007 and again in 2008. Gradually, we will be able to build a more impressive research base and develop a more sophisticated level of understanding about women's experience of contesting local elections and what this might tell us about the wider aspect of under-representation.

The research findings are of interest to a number of different groups. First, they are of interest to local authorities and political parties as they respond to policies designed to encourage the recruitment of a wider cross-section of the public to local councils. They should assist national government initiatives by examining the extent to which the recruitment of women is a function of endogenous and/or exogenous factors. Third, this research will be relevant to the broader investigation on women's recruitment to political office, the vast majority of which is restricted to national elections and thereby fails to take account of the importance of local factors as impediments or catalysts for political careers. Finally, this research may have implications for gender imbalance in other institutional settings, including parliamentary elections, where women, despite many years of active campaigning, continue to occupy fewer positions of power and influence, than do men.

1.2 An Outline of Chapters

Chapter 2 reviews previous research into the reasons for the existence of and continuation of a gender gap in political representation. This literature is important in helping to frame our own set of research questions. Previous studies that concerned parliamentary candidates concluded that women lack the confidence and resources needed for a political career. Indeed, this may also affect women's recruitment for local elections but it is not necessarily the case that the conditions that operate for one type of election carry over into another form of election.

Chapter 3 describes in detail the research design and the methods used for data collection and analysis. This research employs a multi-method approach of secondary analysis, postal survey and telephone interviews as it seeks to triangulate the evidence regarding women's presence in local electoral politics.

Chapter 4 presents the secondary analysis of aggregate local election results. Following a broad overview of patterns and trends in the aggregate data over a long time period the increase in the proportions of women selected and elected is examined for specific cases in the London boroughs, shire districts and metropolitan authorities.

Chapter 5 reports the findings from our national survey of candidates standing for the local elections in 2006. There is an element of serendipity about the year chosen (given the timing of this research programme), featuring as it does elections for the major urban authorities as well as some of those in the less

populated shire areas. The data analysis in Chapter 5 concentrates largely on univariate and also bivariate relationships with a respondent's sex as the principle variable of interest.

The findings from Chapter 5 lead directly into the contents of Chapter 6. This builds upon the previous bivariate findings and tests a series of six multivariate models using loglinear modelling techniques to do so. This particular method is chosen rather than the standards procedures of linear regression and logistic regression that are more popular in the existing research literature. My reasons for following this method are outlined more thoroughly in Chapter 3 but suffice to say here that because the dataset consists largely of categorical variables a loglinear approach appeared to be the correct procedure. Although Chapters 5 and 6 present a wealth of new evidence about the place of women in local government elections there is a sense in which data analysis of both aggregate and individual level data can advance the story only so far. In common with much existing practice in social science research there is a sense in which women's stories should be told by the women themselves.

Accordingly, Chapter 7 reports from the semi-structured interviews with councillors and unelected candidates that contested local elections over the period 2006-2008. The interview schedule is flexible to cover personal circumstances and the responses are organised thematically and provide a vital additional dimension to the quantitative data analysis that preceded it. Indeed, the research strategies complement each other with interview questions informed and framed by the analysis that had gone before.

Chapter 8, the concluding chapter, restates the research aims and objectives as well as the different types of research strategies employed to investigate them. The main findings are summarised and suggestions presented for new research questions that should emerge from these findings.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The aim and purpose of this chapter is to undertake a survey of existing research that relates to the under-representation of women and consider its value for framing the research questions that lie at the heart of this thesis. The literature review reveals considerable interest in the persisting imbalance (the so-called “gender gap”) between the numbers of men and women elected both in the UK and internationally. I do not personally consider “gender” to be synonymous with the biological distinction between males and females but use it here to report the work of other authors. Whilst reviewing this literature the purpose will be to both emphasise the fact that these studies are overwhelmingly concerned with national elections and that the conditions that apply there do not necessarily exist at lower levels of governance. That is not to say that these studies have no value for this study. On the contrary, existing research has succeeded in both addressing some substantial questions about representative democracy and the place of women within it and also in developing a series of theoretical models by way of examining why women are not selected for elected office in a proportion that reflects the balance between men and women in society generally.

The organisation of this chapter is partly thematic and partly contextual. Thematic in the sense of reviewing literature that deals with factors that are crucial to understanding the issue of why the under-representation of women is perceived as a problem and the most likely explanations for the cause of that problem. Contextual in the sense that the place of women in political society is dependent upon political culture, history and the prevailing attitudes towards democratic governance. In short, not every society that claims to be democratic

has responded in the same way to the issue of women's representation amongst the political classes. Indeed, there are important within-society differences that reflect the tensions that continue to affect this issue. Solutions to the problem of under-representation are implemented at some levels of elected government but not at others.

Accordingly, I begin with interpretations of political representation. These distinguish between the descriptive and substantive representation of women and acknowledge that the concept of representation is contested. Section 2.3 looks at explanatory theories for the under-representation of women and summarises the findings from studies of political participation. Much of the empirical research relating to the under-representation of women has been conducted with candidates to the national legislature and the broad findings are summarised in Section 2.4. Despite my own decision to focus largely on the descriptive representation of women in local government Section 2.5 examines the understandable interest in the substantive representation of Labour women in Westminster that followed Blair's victory in 1997. This is followed by an examination of the research into women's experience from the United States.

In Section 2.7 the crucial factors affecting women's chances of being elected are highlighted from cross-national studies while the following section describes the use of quotas for women aimed at boosting their representation and their success in other European countries. Such practices have not been implemented as widely in the UK and indeed the introduction of positive action measures has been problematic (Section 2.9).

Contextually speaking, the final sections are more closely related to the specific aims of my research into the representation of women in English local

government. In a very real sense these studies serve to justify the reasons for this particular study. Whilst some of this research sheds light on the issue of under-representation its deficiencies are readily apparent. Section 2.10 concerns the public perception of local government and how this affects the recruitment of local election candidates. Compared with the interest in MPs and parliamentary candidates there have been relatively few studies of local election candidates. Recently, government initiatives to increase the social representativeness of local councils have increased interest in the proportion of women selected and elected by these particular institutions. Section 2.11 looks at previous government reports that highlight the problem of women's under-representation in local councils and describes the recommendations from the Councillors Commission. What these studies have in common is a rather crucial flaw. Although there have been surveys of councillors, no-one has previously surveyed large numbers of candidates to ask about resources, motivation and opinions. Neither has anyone examined women's presence and success in local council elections at anything other than a very broad level of aggregation.

2.2 Interpretations of Political Representation

The under-representation of women in politics has been explored from two distinctive perspectives arising from different interpretations of political representation, (Mackay 2004). The first approach concentrates on "descriptive representation", concerned with who the elected representatives are. It argues that the current imbalance between elected men and women is unjust and undermines the legitimacy of democratic systems. The basis for such claims is that women make a difference by their very presence and have equal rights with men to be in politics. The women who are elected may not necessarily prioritise

women's interests nor behave differently than men. They stand for women in a symbolic sense, as descriptive representatives in political institutions, (Phillips 1995).

The second approach is "substantive representation" and looks at "what" the representatives do. Once women have been elected, have they used this position to act positively for women and "ensure women's interests are more fully represented in the policy process and consequent policy outcomes?" (Mackay 2004). The concept of substantive representation is somewhat controversial because it makes assumptions about "women" as a group and expectations that women will "act" for women once elected. Substantive representation is also associated with claims that women will bring different experiences and values to politics compared with men, (Lovenduski 2005:18). Although the debate continues over substantive representation it falls outside the remit of this thesis which addresses matters related to the descriptive representation of women.

Another aspect of the debate concerning the under-representation of women is concerned with modern theoretical interpretations of "representation" and "representatives". Representation has always been a contested concept but recently many political theorists consider representation to be a muddle, (Phillips 1995: 41). In the UK representation has been traditionally differentiated by social class and ideology expressed on a left-right continuum. The emphasis was on the policies that would be represented by the elected members. Difference was characterised by values and opinions and not individual characteristics. Recent interest has therefore centred on the importance of increased diversity of elected representatives and in particular recommendations to create more socially representative councils, (DETR 1998,

DETR, 2006). This concern lies at the heart of my own research that seeks to identify, for the first time, the distribution of different ethnic groups among candidates that stand for local election.

2.3 Explanatory Theories for the Under-Representation of Women

The main theories that seek to account for women's descriptive under-representation address the barriers facing women who want to enter male dominated political organisations. The influence of traditional gender socialisation and roles are factors affecting the supply of women candidates. By contrast, party recruitment practices affect the demand for women candidates.

The Fawcett Society, a UK organisation that campaigns for greater political representation for women, categorised the main problems facing women seeking selection as the "four Cs" – culture, childcare, cash and confidence, (Fawcett 2003). Their research showed that the culture of politics is a major disincentive to participation; many women voters perceived the style of politics as confrontational and unappealing. Women MPs surveyed after the 1997 general election complained about the culture of political life. Women MPs commented that because many women retain the main responsibility for caring for children or other relatives, they may be unable to attend evening meetings; this prevents many from seeking selection. In general, women earn less than men and are less able to afford the expenses associated with seeking selection. Apart from the practical barriers and lack of resources, many women lacked the confidence to seek selection

Other researchers concluded that the "four Cs" offer at best only a partial explanation. Able women are to be found in the political parties but the numbers

of women selected remains low and most are not selected to fight winnable or their party's safe seats. Women MPs thought this situation was caused by continuing prejudice among selection committees. The reasons for the paucity of women MPs in Westminster can be attributed to the demand by political parties more than the unwillingness of suitable women candidates. The Fawcett Society research was conducted with women MPs and therefore we do not have the opinions of elected men or any unsuccessful candidates. Furthermore, the case of the 1997 Westminster election is exceptional, with many new women MPs being elected. Extrapolating from a single case is problematic.

Although the opinions are necessarily limited to a small group of women MPs the "four Cs analysis covers barriers faced by women when seeking selection I was interested to see whether this approach could shed some light on barriers faced by women in local elections. However, my research encompasses a sample of *both* men and women candidates and councillors.

The factors highlighted by the Fawcett research will be explored by more detailed questions in the national 2006 Local Candidate Survey because some of the issues raised by women MPs resonated with comments I had received from my initial Devon local election candidates survey conducted in 2003 (N=507). This found that:

An experienced councillor who had tried to recruit new candidates for district and county elections, found it very difficult to persuade capable women to stand for election because of dislike of party politics and confrontation. He said

"they are not interested in this way of working, women do not like to sit in meetings all afternoon, arguing minor points of difference, they think it is a waste of time. The women I know like to get things done and that is

why they work for churches and charities. Such organisations are highly regarded in the community and have plenty of women volunteers”

A district councillor thought that attending evening meetings could be more difficult for many younger women than men. Childcare remains the responsibility of women and limits the time available for any voluntary activity.

“I think a woman decides to go into politics once she has less domestic responsibilities, eg no children to look after then she has more time available”

Apart from having free time, money was mentioned as a necessary resource, although this may be less important for councillors compared with MPs. It is not common for candidates to travel far to find a seat in local elections. Women in public life felt there was pressure to spend on their appearance. The dress and even hairstyles of women councillors at civic functions is mentioned in the local press. Most councillors receive a small annual allowance and not a living wage, therefore another source of income is necessary to cover these personal expenses. Lastly, concerning the confidence to stand, many women said they were asked to stand and it mattered to them whether their close family and friends approved, whereas men were confident in their ability to put themselves forward and concerned less about the approval of others, (Shears 2004).

This evidence from the Devon survey suggested that too few women were prepared to stand in winnable seats, mostly because being a councillor is very time-consuming. However, candidates reported that in many instances party selectors had trouble finding anyone to stand. Although there were no specific complaints concerning the decisions of selection panels, some candidates said the lack of volunteers meant there was no need for a formal selection process. They would like to see an end to the informal recruitment of friends or business associates by serving or retired councillors. This practice should be replaced by

a transparent, open selection process for all seats and a greater effort by parties to encourage people from under-represented groups to stand.

Other research has highlighted interesting differences between men and women in terms of political activism and participation. The Electoral Commission, (EC, 2004) study "Gender and Political Participation" concluded that overall women in the UK were less politically active than men. Differences in the levels of activism varied according to the various methods of defining political activity and what activities were measured. The differences between men and women's involvement indicated that women were equally or more likely to engage as individuals to support cause-oriented activities, e.g. "signing petitions or boycotting products for ethical reasons." Whereas men were more involved in collective acts such as, joining political parties, party donations and party work, they were also more likely than women to join a hobby, sporting or professional group, (Norris et al. 2004: 8). Membership of voluntary civic-oriented groups has been associated with the fostering of social capital and involvement in wider community affairs, (Pattie et al. 2004). Therefore men are more likely to have established networks of local contacts that endorse their intention to stand for election.

The Electoral Commission report also found that women were significantly less likely than men to join a political party and be involved in election campaigning. That was an important factor accounting for the lower proportion of women candidates. Fewer women, (4%) compared with men, (6%), joined a political party, although the percentage difference is small, it is statistically significant, (Norris et al. 2004). Most of the candidates in local

elections represented political parties and if fewer women are party members, one of the main recruitment channels was proportionally less available.

One of the key perceived barriers in the recruitment of women is that various studies have found that women respond differently to politics differently than men. Research findings from various British Attitudes Surveys, (BAS 1997, 2001 & 2002) concluded that generally public trust in the system of government fell in the 1990s but Women's Social Attitudes Report (1999) highlighted the different levels of trust in local councillors expressed by younger women compared with those aged 55 years or over.

"Whereas one in five women aged 55 or over "almost never" trusts a local councillor to put his or her area's needs above party interests, this applies to only in ten women, aged between 18-34." (Jarvis 1999:13).

Furthermore, women of all ages were more likely than men to say that they found politics difficult to understand.

"Nearly three-quarters of women, (72 per cent) agree that they sometimes find politics so complicated that they can't really understand what is happening, compared with just over one half of men, (54 per cent)" (Jarvis 1999 :15).

This confidence in their ability to understand politics partially explains why men are more likely to put themselves forward for election. This finding was substantiated by the respondents to my own survey of candidates standing for local elections in Devon in 2003. A greater proportion of men said it was their personal decision to stand. Women were more likely to mention that someone else influenced or encouraged them to be a candidate, (Shears 2004). Although a smaller proportion of women stood for election, there was no significant difference in the level of electoral success between men and women, 41% of women and 46% of the men were elected. There were a large number of councillors standing for re-election, therefore when controlling for the advantage

of male incumbency, women were just as likely to be elected as men. In short, this evidence suggests that when women do stand the electorate do not appear to discriminate against them. This view is based on a very small sample and therefore one of the key aims of this research is to test this proposition on a very much larger data set – local elections in England in every local authority from 1973 onwards.

2.4 *Equal Opportunities Commission and Westminster Parliamentary Candidates*

In 2002 the Equal Opportunities Commission published its report entitled, “Man enough for the job? A study of Parliamentary candidates.” The Commission had received comments from women Parliamentary candidates relating to incidences of prejudice and bias during the party political selection procedures. Discriminatory processes appeared to be contributory factors in the low number of women selected by the parties in marginal constituencies. Subsequently the Commission set about collecting data from men and women candidates in order to see if there was any evidence to support these anecdotal comments. Men and women candidates from five political parties, (Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat, Scottish National and Plaid Cymru), contesting Westminster elections were surveyed. It discovered significant discrimination in the selection processes. Both male and female candidates believed that the selection committees favoured male candidates. Women were more likely to say that they were aware of prejudice or sex discrimination in the selection process, 44% of women and 17% of men, (Elgood et al 2002). The strongest complaints were made by Conservative women candidates, saying that the members of the final selection committee were old, out of touch with modern times and unsympathetic towards working women. At selection

meetings women were asked questions about caring for their spouses and children, questions that were not put to men candidates. Labour women candidates reported that trades unions' representatives on selection committees prefer men candidates and here too women felt that unlike the men candidates they had been asked personal questions. Women felt that they had to overcome an extra barrier to selection by having to explain how they planned to manage family responsibilities with the demands of being an MP.

A rather more systematic and broad-ranging study of recruitment practices had been undertaken prior to this by Norris and Lovenduski for the general election in 1992. This focused on the gender, class and race of parliamentary candidates and party recruitment practices (Norris & Lovenduski 1995). They identified three separate levels at which barriers or constraints to participation may operate: systemic, party political and individual supply and demand. Systemic factors could be the legal, electoral or party system and structure of opportunities. Party political factors included party organisation, party rules, ideology and recruitment procedures. Individual recruitment factors were, on the supply side, the resources and motivation of individuals and, on the demand side, the attitudes and practices of gatekeepers.

Crucially, the barriers identified in the Norris/Lovenduski research may affect participation in local elections also. Their supply and demand model can be explored through survey questions concerning individual motivation, resources and experience of recruitment. More than nine in ten councillors in England are recruited by the three main parties. I would not expect the motivations for standing at the local level to be directly comparable with parliamentary candidates. Parliamentary candidates are aiming for a career whereas most councillors volunteer for a part-time occupation. Nevertheless,

the national survey of local candidates will include questions concerning supply and demand factors in order to test properly some of the propositions made in that theory.

The survey of general election candidates in 1992 was the first in a series and was successfully followed by further British Representation Studies in 1997, 2001 and 2005. Taken together the evidence is a useful resource in understanding the experience of women candidates to parliamentary elections. The 2001 findings showed that party ideology was a more reliable predictor of attitude than gender, (Lovenduski & Norris 2003). Men and women within a party were in broad agreement on economic issues, Britain and EU and core values. Labour women were slightly more moderate on economic issues than were Labour men. There were significant differences between the attitudes of men and women when questioned about topics more directly related to women's interests, equal opportunities and affirmative action, such as all-women shortlists, party quotas or reserved seats. There were differences in the attitudes of the men and women in each party in response to the questions about support for equal opportunities and women's suitability for public office. There were strong and significant gender differences among Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrats. In each party men were less approving than women of affirmative action, (Lovenduski & Norris 2003).

Lovenduski and Norris expected that affirmative action initiatives such as all-women shortlists, quotas or reserved seats were more likely to be approved by women than men of all parties but were surprised by the extent of difference. Although the presence of more women MPs has not radically changed the dominant culture at Westminster they do find that:

"The evidence consistently suggests that women politicians in all the major British parties (not just Labour) do bring a different set of values to issues affecting women's equality in the workplace, home and public sphere... Therefore the entry of more women into Westminster has the capacity to make more than simply a symbolic difference to the face of British democracy." (Lovenduski & Norris 2002:15)

Discovering this difference in values between men and women that transcended party affiliation led Norris and Lovenduski to conclude that this signifies a necessary but not sufficient condition for women representatives to act for women as a group. Whilst these observations are invaluable in understanding the under-representation of women in the UK parliament they offer merely clues about what may be taking place at the local level. Arguably, the parliamentary and local contexts are different enough that findings from these studies are not applicable to the local experience. One of the crucial aims in this thesis is to assess the degree of overlap and the extent of differences for women challenging for elected office at separate levels of governance in the UK.

2.5 Substantive Representation at Westminster

In June 1997, 120 women were elected to the House of Commons, doubling the number of women from the previous parliament. The first woman was elected to the House of Commons in 1918 but it was not until 1997, eighty years later that the proportion of women MPs exceeded 10%. Although still less than one in five MPs is a woman, this increase was noteworthy, attracted much publicity and speculation that this advance would affect the dominant male culture of Parliament. Most of the new women were Labour MPs and many selected from controversial positive action initiatives including all-women shortlists. Subsequently the new electoral systems introduced for the devolved legislatures of Scotland and Wales combined with party quotas facilitated greater proportions of women members.

Since 1997 the increased numbers of women elected to Parliament provided opportunities to examine whether women have made a difference by their presence in the context of UK party politics. The consensus so far is that the picture is complex and many factors determine whether and how women can make a difference. Research into the presence of women in the House of Commons concludes that numbers alone do not provide a full explanation, (Lovenduski and Norris 2003, Childs 2001, Cowley and Childs 2003). The increased numbers of women may have the potential to make a difference but this must be set within the context of institutional and party political factors. Constituency work is one area where women MPs may have more autonomy and working with women's organisations can represent women's interests more substantively. While the interest in the 1997 and subsequent parliaments is interesting from an academic viewpoint its value is limited because the causes are so specific – without Labour's policy of recruitment favouring women the situation would not have occurred. By contrast, local government experience is much richer since the research can consider many hundred of elected authorities over a much longer time span. Political culture, party willingness to embrace the cause of women's recruitment etc. may be properly considered when there are many more cases to examine. Accordingly, our research considers aggregate data on English local council elections over a broad time period and allows us to delve more deeply into patterns of recruitment and election of women.

2.6 Gender and the Decision to Run for Office in the USA

One interesting approach adopted in consideration of the under-representation of women is the Citizen Political Ambition Study conducted in USA in 2003, (Fox & Lawless 2004). They concurred with previous studies that

no evidence existed of gender bias amongst voters in US elections. However, that did not mean the electoral process was not gender-neutral simply because the “end stage” appeared to be. Fox and Lawless suspected that conventional theories of under-representation could not fully explain the relatively small numbers of women elected. They acknowledged the advantage of incumbents and historically the fewer number of women in high-level positions in law, business, education and politics; the professions from which political candidates usually emerged. Accordingly, they created a “candidate eligibility pool” – people with the potential to pursue a political career - based on a sample of men and women with matched professional qualifications from those four professions. Fox and Lawless found, “that at the aggregate level, women even in the top tier of professional accomplishment are less likely than their male counterparts to consider running for political office” (Fox and Lawless, 2004, p. 265). Despite having similar socioeconomic status, professional standing and as much interest in politics as men, women reported lower levels of political ambition and were significantly less likely to emerge as candidates.

Although the authors stated there was evidence to support the diminishing effects of gender socialisation on women's advancement in politics they identified four areas where traditional gender role expectations still affected the likelihood of candidacy. The local political environment may influence public attitudes; women had been more successful in elections in States that encouraged their participation in public affairs. Women were more likely to have greater family responsibilities than men and these commitments may preclude some women from running for office. Women were also less likely to think of themselves as being sufficiently qualified to run for office; men were almost twice as likely as women to rate themselves as “very qualified” to run. Lastly,

women were more likely to consider running where policy issues affecting women and children were concerned. This study concluded that the gender gap in political ambition amongst this sample of “eligible” candidates most probably endured in the USA for two fundamental recruitment disparities. Women were less likely to be approached by leaders of political groups and receive encouragement to stand for election and on average women did not believe they were qualified to run for office. This research is thought-provoking and different, and may get closer to probable explanations of why women do not stand. It is not possible to replicate their approach in the context of English local council candidates, however, since we have no prior knowledge of the kinds of professions that current candidates belong to. Once our national survey is undertaken and analysed it may then be possible to replicate the Fox and Lawless methodology, identifying an eligibility pool and sampling people from among professions that tend to be represented in greater numbers among local election candidates. However, differences in the levels of political ambition between men and women is something that may be explored through analysis of the survey data and subsequent interviews.

More recent research from the United States was undertaken by, Kira Sanbonmatsu who published her findings from interviews with state legislators and surveys of local party leaders and candidates in the USA. Sanbonmatsu said that gender parity in electoral success gave rise to the slogan “When women run, women win”. Therefore, she concluded the under-representation of women in state legislatures is caused by the scarcity of women candidates. The fundamental research question then becomes, “why don’t more women run for public office?” Running for state legislature is often the first experience for a

candidate seeking a political career in the USA and, therefore, the attitudes of candidates and those who recruited them may explain the shortage of women. This research contested the assumption that political parties “are peripheral to contemporary elections because primary voters – not party organisations – select candidates” (Sanbonmatsu 2006).

The findings from interviews and surveys show that, contrary to popular belief, parties positively encouraged women to stand, sometimes approaching individuals who had not thought about doing so. Parties also acted as gatekeepers and could discourage candidates from entering the primary. Strong party organisations can also have a negative effect on women’s representation because of gatekeeping effects. In some states the local party leaders were doubtful of women’s electoral success in some districts. About half thought that women have an electoral advantage and half thought men would be more successful. The survey respondents thought that despite changing gender roles, cultural stereotypes and traditional family responsibilities continued to be barriers to women’s representation. Although women are now more prominent in the professions that typically supply political candidates many women lack the informal gendered social networks that support political ambition. Many of Sanbonmatsu’s respondents talked about the “old boys’ network” and the extent of informal contacts that identify potential candidates. They did not believe that men consciously discriminate against women but put simply, men socialise with other men and approached people they knew. Whereas women also had organisations and support groups, they were not normally in positions of party leadership to promote their contacts. Respondents thought that it was harder to recruit women because they did not think of themselves as qualified to run nor did women plan a political career. Although elections in the USA are candidate

centred, the recruitment practices of political parties did affect women's participation in US state legislatures. The lessons from this particular study are that gendered social networks serve to ration the numbers of women that stand as candidates and that because men often occupy party leadership roles this process is difficult to overcome, at least in the short term. It will be interesting to determine whether and how similarly gendered networks operate for candidate recruitment to English council elections.

2.7 Women's Representation: International Comparisons

The overall percentage of women elected to national parliaments remains at 18% (IDEA/int. 2007) but considerable variations exist between countries. The Inter parliamentary union has compiled a table ranking 190 countries according to the percentage of women in their lower or single house of parliament. Rwanda has the highest proportion of women representative, 48.8%; the UK with 17.9% is placed joint 52nd with the Dominican Republic.

In parts of Europe it is only since the beginning of the twentieth century that political rights were extended to more men and women. At the end of World War I the right to vote and stand for office was extended to some men and women in Great Britain, Ireland, Germany and Sweden. Scandinavian countries were the first to increase significantly the numbers of women elected and continue to have among the highest proportions. The initial success during the 1970s in Norway was largely attributed to the decision by feminist groups to cooperate with women members of the political parties. This was to encourage more women to stand as candidates, be elected, promote issues that affected women and then act as "women representing women". This integrationist

strategy proved to be very effective and in the 1970s women's representation rose from below 10% to range between 20-25% in local and national assemblies. By 1989 this had increased by a further 10% overall, (Skjeie 1993). The willingness of women party activists to collaborate with women's movement groups to promote women in a non partisan alliance is a feature of Scandinavian politics not found elsewhere until recently. As long ago as 1967 the alliance in Norway went further by launching the first cross- party election campaign to appeal to women.

Naturally, research has sought to identify the potential causes of the variability in the proportion of women election. Studlar and McAllister described four conditions that have influenced the proportion of women elected in twenty industrialise democracies over fifty years. Firstly, the institutional rules including the electoral system and competitiveness of the party system. Secondly, the presence of an egalitarian political culture and consideration of the length of time since women were enfranchised. Thirdly, the enthusiasm of political parties to promote and support women for election and fourthly, each country's economic development, (Studlar & Mc Allister 2002).

Institutional rules, including the voting system, appear to have a major role in affecting the proportion of women who are elected. Proportional representation systems are more favourable for women candidates than majoritarian systems, (Norris 1987). Historically, party list proportional systems have provided better opportunities for women than alternative PR systems, (Matland 1998). The competitiveness of the party system and participation in voting are also important. In general, a multi-party competitive system and the creation of new parties seem to afford better opportunities for women candidates than systems with fewer parties. However, this also depends upon

other national circumstances, such as, political culture and parties' ideologies, France for instance, has a fragmented multi-party system but relatively few women elected, compared with other European countries, (Norris 1993: 319).

The presence of an egalitarian political culture e.g. Norway and Sweden is thought to assist the increased representation of women. The period of time since women's enfranchisement is important; the earlier that women achieved voting rights the greater is their electoral success. The third factor that affects women's representation is the enthusiasm of political parties to promote women members. Finally, the economic development of a country and increases in women's affluence and educational achievements positively enhance women's electoral success*.

However, various methods of results-based quotas have been introduced in countries that have not traditionally been associated with a high proportion of women elected. It is interesting to identify the nature of these quotas and what effect, if any, they have made upon women's under-representation. Is it the case that changing the balance of women's representation must come from without rather than from within the existing party structures, recruitment process and social networks?

Reserved seats, women only lists or "best loser" overcome the resistance of parties to voluntarily select women. Reserving a certain number of seats for women in an assembly has been very effective in Uganda and India.

**Some new democracies in under-developed nations have introduced quotas and reserved seats for women.*

In 1992 the 73rd Amendment of the Indian Constitution stated that one third of the seats must be reserved for women in all village, block and district level bodies and in the posts of chairperson and vice-chairperson across all these institutions. The 74th Amendment subsequently extended these provisions to municipal corporations in urban areas. Prior to these amendments the political parties in India had been reluctant to field women candidates, (Kumar & Kidwai 1996). Historically, the low participation of women in politics in India is fundamentally linked with women's traditional role as subordinate to men in every aspect of life. More women have been recruited by the parties to meet the quotas

There has also been a national programme of gender sensitisation to "educate" the public to accept the new roles assigned to women, (Singh 2000). In Europe reserved seats for women has largely been restricted to former communist governments in Central and Eastern Europe. The "best loser" system is used in Jordan; a quota of women will be guaranteed seats even if they won fewer votes than male candidates, (Int.IDEA 2006).

2.8 Quotas for Women Candidates and European Law

Some political parties have been willing to introduce voluntary quotas or set targets for the proportion of women candidates and quotas have been a successful method of increasing the proportion of women who are elected. The EU Amsterdam Treaty, 1999, allowed for equality measures in all member states and laid the legal foundations for positive action to favour the under-represented sex. A directive in 2002 stated:

“Member States may maintain or adopt measures within the meaning of the article 141.4 of the Treaty with a view to ensuring full equality in practice between men and women” (Greboval 2004)

and The European Parliament, (EP) recommended a common procedure for elections:

“When lists of candidates for European elections are drawn up, account must be taken of the objective of equality between men and women and that it is primarily for political parties to achieve this objective directly”

This is only a recommendation therefore it is for each member state and their parties to stipulate the rules for candidate selection for the EP. The Council of Europe also recommended balanced participation of men and women in political decision-making in 2003 but none of these suggestions is legally binding.

A variety of quotas for women have been introduced by some EU member states. For elections to their national parliaments, France has a quota for women candidates that required a constitutional amendment. Belgium, Spain and Portugal have legislative quotas that are embedded within electoral law. Both forms of quota are enforced by legal sanctions for non-compliance, with varying degrees of success in the increased numbers of women elected. In Italy there were quota laws until 1995, when the Constitutional Court repealed them, ruling that they violated Article 51 of the Constitution guaranteeing equal treatment. Constitutional and legislative quotas are also implemented for sub-national elections in France, Spain, Belgium and Portugal.

The Greek constitution allows for equal number of men and women candidates on electoral lists for local and regional elections; any ballot with less than one-third women on the list will be rejected. A new law in Slovenia is

phasing in quotas in local elections, requiring 20% women candidates in 2006 and rising to 40% by 2015. In Spain quotas are also a requirement by some of the "Autonomous Communities" including the Balearic Islands, Basque country and Andalusia.

Within the EU member states voluntary party quotas are widespread. Mostly these are quotas for women candidates on party lists; some include requirements for gender rank-ordering on the list, therefore increasing women's chances of being elected. The proportions vary from 20% to 50%. The Swedish Social Democratic Party has a 50% quota and alternates men and women on the list, known as "zippering". An exception is the Social Democratic Party in the Czech Republic which goes beyond candidate quotas and stipulates that 25% of their elected representatives must be women. If women are not placed among the top candidates then the Social Democrats Women's Organisation will nominate extra women. Where quotas for women are a legal requirement, some states have reduced the state funding to political parties who do not comply with legislation. Alternatively, a party that introduces voluntary quotas can be offered financial rewards when they increase women's participation. One example is Croatia, (non EU) where any party that has women elected to parliament will receive 10% extra funding, (INT IDEA 2008).

2.9 Quotas and Sex Discrimination Legislation in the UK

The practice in other parts of Europe and elsewhere is in stark contrast to the UK experience. Here, parties have used quota systems but not as extensively as elsewhere because the electoral system, single member parliamentary constituencies, the low turnover of MPs and vacancies means

parties often wait for an MP to retire before selecting another candidate. The creation of two new national assemblies in 1999 for Scotland and Wales offered a unique opportunity. There were no incumbents to be considered, allowing parties to select equal numbers of men and women candidates if they wished. The Labour party chose to use "twinning" and the Liberal Democrats 50/50 shortlists for constituency seats in elections for Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly elections. The Conservative party, SNP and Plaid Cymru did not adopt any positive action measures for these elections.

The Labour party's decision to adopt all-women shortlists, (AWS) for selection of parliamentary candidates had proved far more controversial. From 1993 -1996 local parties in half of the estimated "winnable seats" were required to select from AWS. The legality of this positive action was challenged by Peter Jepson, a law lecturer who applied to be the prospective parliamentary candidate for Labour in two London constituencies and Mr Dyas-Elliott who wished to stand in Keighley, Yorkshire; all three were designated AWS constituencies. Jepson and Dyas-Elliott argued that the practice contravened the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, because the selection procedure especially in a safe seat was essentially entry to employment as an MP. The tribunal agreed that AWS barred men from employment and was contrary to EU and UK law. The Labour party did not appeal and stopped any further selections by AWS in 1996. Subsequently the EU Treaty of Amsterdam allowed for positive action in employment to improve the chances of the under-represented sex "but not automatic preference for an inferior candidate solely because of her sex". The European Court of Justice has interpreted this law so that positive action is allowed but not rigidly to prevent men from access to posts. In 2002 the ECJ ruled that the member states could give priority to women in areas where

women were under-represented even if men and women were equally qualified for a position. Such priority must to be objectively assessed taking into account the particular national situation and qualifications of male and female applicants. The EU law is still unclear concerning election candidates and although mandatory and voluntary quota systems operate in many European countries they are not necessarily legal. The European Convention on Human Rights requires "free elections" and this is another dimension for consideration, it appears that positive action is acceptable if it can be justified on proportionality grounds, (Strickland 2001).

2.10 Recruitment for Local Elections

Research by the Local Government Association (LGA) concluded that, "successive measures which have constrained and misdirected responsibilities away from local government seems to have had a dramatic impact on how local government is perceived in the eyes of the local community" (LGA 2000). The councillors who were interviewed by the Fawcett Society believed that many people believed that the powers of local government had been reduced to such an extent that councils were unable to make significant changes to their locality and therefore it was not worth voting in local elections. (Gill 2000) The councillors interviewed by Fawcett spoke of the general shortage of people willing to stand for election and some of them talked of "arm twisting and bullying people who showed the remotest interest into agreeing to stand" (Gill 2000:8). Whilst this practice solved the immediate problem at election times it did not address the fundamental issue of attracting enthusiastic candidates. To date there has been little research interest into what motivates people to stand as candidates for local elections. There have been a few small-scale studies of the motives of people prepared to stand for election and these were

predominantly with serving councillors and not all candidates, (Bochel & Bochel 2000, and Barron, Crawley & Wood 1991).

Research by Rao (1998) examines the classical model of political recruitment that originated in the United States. This model analyses political recruitment by considering individual motivations, resources and opportunities. This approach was originally designed for the non-partisan political culture of the USA. Despite this it takes account of factors that contributes towards a better understanding of the under-representation of certain groups in local government in the UK. The research presents evidence from surveys of councillors in Britain over the past thirty years. The importance of the recruitment practices of the political parties is recognised, especially since this research shows that whilst the parties provide opportunities they also have the potential to create barriers for some people. People with certain personality characteristics are more inclined towards seeking public office: they want to be influential and are gratified to hold positions where they can meet and possibly help other people. Rao's research suggests that, some councillors are committed to representing the interests of local groups, others to the general sense of community service; fewer are pursuing ideological principles even if they were recruited from party activists. Some wish to become councillors to enjoy the social life and prestige. Although personality traits may predispose some people towards public life they still need the appropriate resources and opportunities to succeed. Resources are defined as those factors that typify the social status of most councillors, superior income, occupation and education. These are usually combined with spare time, or flexibility in working arrangements. A strong sense of attachment to the area and a record of active involvement in their communities are also positive background resources when seeking political office.

It is perhaps this history of community involvement that is most important in affording the opportunity to be selected as a candidate by a political party or receive support from voters when standing as an Independent. Rao notes that the numbers of Independent candidates has diminished and now membership of a political party is almost a prerequisite for election in all but the rural fringe. A significant minority of voters in rural areas still supports Independents and feels that local elections should be about local issues and not party political contests. When a vacancy arises a person is likely to be asked to stand as an Independent candidate by friends, serving or retiring councillors or sponsored by a local community group. These informal routes provide the opportunity and support for independent candidacy that is otherwise provided by the political parties.

John Meadowcroft (2001) looked specifically at the recruitment of Liberal Democrat councillors and the extent to which they fitted existing models of political recruitment. This study explored the importance of informal recruitment as a probable explanation for the continuing over-representation of white, middle-aged male councillors. Serving councillors tended to associate with people similar to themselves who encouraged them to stand for election when vacancies arose. Barron, Crawley and Wood (1991) echoed this in what they describe as the "ambition or drift" theory of selection. They challenged the idea that election candidates always have political ambitions or that people will primarily act rationally and in self-interest. In local elections particularly, many candidates are approached because they have been voluntary party workers and are persuaded to stand as candidates by friends and fellow party members. They also found that many candidates had drifted into agreeing to stand because nobody else was prepared to do so and they only agreed in support of

the political party. At both national and local levels, therefore, the parties have a crucial role as the gatekeepers to candidacy recruitment.

A report published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in 2006 identified the pivotal role of political parties in candidate recruitment. The three main parties in England provided over 95 per cent of all councillors but their selection processes failed to provide a diversity of candidates. The bias towards white, middle-aged males was perpetuated by the ageing and declining membership of the parties, (Wheeler 2006). Wheeler proposed a five point plan intended to help parties to attract a wider group of active citizens to stand for elections:

- Open recruitment going beyond the activist members, by talent spotting or direct advertising.
- Party selection: a change to present rules for nomination and selection to ensure that selection is based on merit. To avoid decisions taken by small and possible unrepresentative groups in the party.
- Roles and responsibilities: Clearly define the role of councillors at non-executive and executive level and define skills need to perform these roles effectively.
- Restoring civic pride: recognize that local democracy is a combination of political and civic leadership.
- Improve the supply of candidates of working age: discuss with business organizations and government to provide more support for candidates of working age, (Wheeler 2006: viii).

2.11 *Government Reports and the Gender Imbalance in English Local Councils*

Despite this research, it is surprising that there has been little interest in women's under-representation in UK local elections compared with parliamentary elections. Until the creation of new national assemblies in Wales and Scotland, local government had the greatest proportion of women in British elected institutions. In 2000, a government report, "The Democratic Deficit", specifically addressed the gender imbalance in local councils,

"Local government lacks credibility if it appears out of touch with the society it represents. Equality of representation of women in local government must be part of the agenda for modernisation of local democracy, giving it new vigour and relevance" (Harman 2000)

The government's reform agenda sought to improve the credibility of local government by increasing public interest in the work of councils. Previous government sponsored studies of councillors all concluded that councillors are unrepresentative of the overall population, (Maud, 1964; Bains, 1972; Robinson, 1976; Widdecombe, 1985). Between 1964 and 1985 the gender composition of councils changed. In 1964, 12% of councillors were female and by 1985, this had risen to 19%, (Brown et al. 1999:3) and by 2004 to 29%, (I&DEA 2004: 2) In short, women still comprise fewer than one in three councillors but this is better than the one in eight at the beginning of the 1960s. Nationally, there is a greater proportion of female councillors in the London boroughs, (31%), Metropolitan districts, (31%), shire districts, (29%) and English unitaries, (29%) than in shire counties, (25%), (I&DeA 2004:22). Why the proportion of women standing and being elected has remained at these levels is an important aspect of this research thesis.

In October 2006 the White Paper, "Strong and Prosperous Communities" was published. It echoes the concerns of previous reports. Although this report

outlines measures that could be introduced to encourage different people to stand for election it acknowledged that the framework in which local authorities operate can still be a barrier to effective, accountable and responsive government. In particular the difficulties political parties faced when recruiting new candidates is recognised. Instances of political parties' successful recruitment of a wider range of candidates in London borough elections are cited as examples of progress. During 2007 The Councillors Commission, set up as an independent review, collected evidence from England and Wales about the incentives and barriers that encourage or deter people from standing as councillors (Councillors Commission 2007). The main points from the report that relate to this research are described below.

In "Representing the Future" the Councillors Commission concluded that there are major problems to be addressed if councils are to encourage more able, talented and representative people to become councillors. Fundamentally, the public image of local government is poor and many people have little idea about what local government is and how it works. Councillors are significantly unrepresentative of the population as a whole. Less than a third of councillors are women, the average age of councillors is 58 years, almost half of English councillors are graduates and many are retired or self-employed. Only 4% are from an ethnic minority background, the electoral success of ethnic communities is predominantly in urban and metropolitan areas. Almost half of the BAME population in England lives in London (census 2001). It is not surprising therefore that more than half of BAME councillors represent London Boroughs. Nevertheless:

" the proportion of councillors who are white is higher than their proportion in the general population in all regions of England including London" (I&DeA 2007)

The Councillors Commission found that people became councillors for a variety of reasons. Wishing to serve the community was the most common reason followed by wishing to change things and political beliefs. Being asked to stand was also important for one in three councillors and this was an important factor for more women than men. The report highlights many barriers that affect recruitment of councillors. The lack of awareness of what councillors do, especially among young people means that it did not occur to people to stand. The culture of local government was not appealing; there was a negative image of politicians, government and political parties. In particular local authority culture was alienating for some people from ethnic minority backgrounds, (Solomos and Back 1995). People from BAME communities are involved in their communities but not with political parties, the formal meetings and committees are not appealing. Yet, interestingly, the parties have also been criticised for selecting "non standard" candidates, ie. non- white in those wards where it was assumed that a BAME candidate would attract the "ethnic" vote and win the seat.

People spoke about their lack of confidence to put themselves forward for election. The time commitment was also a major barrier and this may have affected women more than men because many women work and have family responsibilities. Lastly the report finds that many employers were not supportive of members of staff who were councillors.

The Commission's report, containing more than sixty recommendations, made a number that impact upon framing the research questions in this research. Local authorities should provide more information about the workings of local government and promote the role of councillors. Public broadcasters

should publicise the work of councils. The role of councillor should be compatible with full-time working, this would also assist younger women who may work part-time and care for young children. Councils should adopt modern business and meeting practices, reduce length of meeting, have evening meeting and reduce paperwork. Councils should support councillors with casework and provide childcare. It should be made easier for a more diverse range of candidates to stand for election. Multi-member wards should be introduced in all authorities, this system encourages the parties to present a balanced slate and select more candidates from under-represented groups. There should be a statutory requirement to limit councillors to five consecutive terms in office, thereby removing incumbents, (mostly men), more frequently. A large number of these recommendations are specifically designed of course to increase the proportion of women and other under-represented groups. The problem with this research, as with most other previous survey research in this area is that the people surveyed are people that are already elected. By sampling candidates, elected and not elected, we broaden the research inquiry to take account of factors that may lie behind the under-representation of women in English local government.

2.12 Overview

Research has tried to establish what is meant by the expression "under-representation of women; and primarily concerned itself with the barriers to women's entry into politics. Amongst the main issues that have been raised in this context is that the culture of politics is a major disincentive to participation; many women voters perceived the UK style of politics as confrontational and unappealing. Apart from the practical barriers and lack of resources, there is accusations of prejudice among selection committees.

Research has mapped the rise of women in UK parliament and elsewhere and significant differences exist among nation states. The UK appears to rank towards the lower end of the spectrum. The under-representation of women has been addressed in various countries and legislation designed to redress the imbalance has been promoted. These have included specified quotas for women but in places, including the UK this practice has met with opposition and legal challenges. A fundamental weakness of this research, however, has been the concentration on parliamentary elections at the expense of other types of electoral competition.

Yet, it is known that women challenge for and are more successful in local government elections than other types. What has not yet been explored is the difference between local authorities and variability between parties. A principal aim of this research is to contribute towards a greater understanding of the level of contestation by women in English local government and to examine whether the kinds of attitudes and characteristics of candidates experienced at the national level replicate something found at the local level. This research aims to fill some of the gaps in knowledge concerning women candidates and councillors in England. Although the overall numbers of women standing and successful in local elections is known there have been no detailed studies of the difference in the proportions of women standing between types of authority and councils within authority types.

Previous research with parliamentary candidates highlights the motivations of individuals who stand, the attitudes of party selectors and the public perception of government. The reasons behind the low numbers of women

selected has been analysed through theories that emphasise supply and demand concepts. The supply side would be identifying the resources of candidates and comparing men and women. On average women lack the professional experience, money and time compared with men. Women's political aspirations are also affected by the demands of political parties and selector bias towards a "standard" candidate, ie, a white man. Recruitment for local government as with parliamentary candidates remains mostly the responsibility of the political parties but they must operate in a different context for local elections and very little is known about the recruitment of local candidates. One aim of this research is to see whether previous explanations for the paucity of women MPs have any relevance to the numbers of women elected to local councils. This literature review has suggested some interesting starting points for my own study but nobody has researched this topic with a large sample of local election candidates in England before now. I will use the supply and demand model as a useful reference point but situated within the reality of local government. The findings will be new knowledge and may resonate with previous smaller studies.

The next chapter describes the research design, the research questions and methods used for the secondary analysis of election results, the postal survey and the semi-structured interviews.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methods

3.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by describing the background to this study and introduces the research design, the research questions and methods. Section 3.3 explains the design rationale and illustrates how the research methods complement each other and address the research questions. In section 3.4 the three distinct methods are described. The next three sections explain the research procedures for each method.

3.2 Background and Research Design

The literature review of the previous chapter revealed that the unrepresentativeness of councillors has been identified by a series of government sponsored reports, (DETR 1998; I&DeA 2004 & 2006). The continuing gender gap in political representation has been recognised as a problem for democratic accountability and the modernisation of local authorities, (White Paper 2006 & DCLG 2007). These issues are central to this research, if women constitute approximately half of the population why are they only a third of councillors? During the last fifty years the proportion of women standing and being elected has almost doubled, (Borisjuk 2007). The percentage of women candidates standing for election in all types of English local authorities rose steadily during the twentieth century to 16% in 1964. The following years brought a gradual increase in the proportion of women standing such that by the early 1990s the level had almost doubled. However, since then the rate of growth has stopped and this plateau has been observed but not explained.

Accordingly, the principal research questions are; what proportion of women have been selected and elected in local elections? Was the increase homogenous or did this vary significantly between authorities and parties and has it fluctuated over time? Why after a period of almost continual growth has the rate of increase stopped? Why do men and women stand for local election in 2006 and are there differences between the motives of men and women? What are the opinions of present day candidates on the government's modernisation initiatives? and what could be done to redress the current under-representation of women as councillors?

This research design uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to increase our understanding of the dynamics of women's representation in local government both over time and in the modern era. The research design should provide the framework for the collection and analysis of data, (Bryman 2000). The first method used is a secondary analysis of local election results, many of which have only become available recently, to describe women's participation in elections, over time and across different types of authority.

Second, is a national survey of candidates standing for election in 2006 and addresses the motives for standing and their opinions about a range of issues relating to women's under- representation. The third element of the research design consists of a number of semi-structured interviews with councillors and unelected candidates which explore their personal experience of becoming a local election candidate.

3.3 Design Rationale

Although these stages in the research have been described separately, they are designed to complement each other and address the research questions from different perspectives. This research benefits from the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods.

“Quantitative analysis often deals with large amounts of data which researchers analyse using statistical techniques. Qualitative research differs as it generally makes use of fewer cases or smaller amounts of data. It follows that those who use quantitative analysis focus on describing and explaining behaviour, whilst those utilising qualitative methods are more concerned to understand the meaning of such behaviour to those being studied” (Read & Marsh 2002).

The secondary analysis of the local election results is firmly based in the positivist tradition of quantitative research. The election results are “facts” and can be observed and measured as they are repeated over many years. The primary data collection is predominantly a quantitative survey of candidates’ behaviour but also contains questions about attitudes and opinions. Quantitative research relies on observing and measuring repeated incidences of political phenomenon. The analysis of variables from a large number of cases will make it possible to make inferences about a class of political behaviour, (John 2002). The responses from this representative sample can be generalised to all candidates. The semi-structured interviews are qualitative and complementing the survey and secondary data analyses this is an interpretivist research strategy to report what the interviewees think is important.

3.4 The Research Methods

Firstly, the analysis of aggregate data held by the LGC Elections Centre based at the University of Plymouth facilitates the identification of historical trends within parties and /or authorities over time, (see chapter 4). The Centre holds election results from England, Wales and Scotland from the 1973

reorganisation onwards but it has recently compiled historical data prior to local government reorganisation. These historical data will be examined to detect and highlight patterns in the recruitment and election of women candidates. Such data may allow me to identify whether local context appears as an important variable. Analysis of more recent data shows that local authorities differ widely in the proportion of women that stand for election, (Borisjuk et al. 2007). It is not known whether such variability represents random fluctuation or is part of a much longer and systematic bias towards or against women candidates in some local contexts. Using these historical data it will also be possible to see in the aggregate whether there has been a steady increase in women candidates or whether the proportion surges and then stabilises over time, suggesting, perhaps, exogenous forces largely explain trends in the recruitment of women. Finally, these aggregate data present opportunities to compare candidate recruitment among local political parties over many years, thereby permitting the research to shed light on variability between parties.

The second major line of research inquiry is a national survey of candidates contesting the 2006 local elections in England, (see chapters 5 & 6). Unfortunately, because of the electoral cycle it is not possible to survey candidates neither in Scotland and Wales nor in County councils in England. Nevertheless, this provides an opportunity to survey candidates standing in a broad range of urban, suburban and rural authorities. The intention is to conduct a 20% sample of candidates (in the equivalent elections in 2002 the total number of candidates was 17,890). The methods that were tried and tested in my earlier Local Election Candidate Survey in Devon in 2003 survey are repeated, (Shears 2004).

The local authorities publish the "Statement of Persons Nominated" for election early in April, listing the names and addresses of all candidates. This allows ample time to personalise the covering letter and prepare for posting the questionnaires. The timing of the initial contact with candidates is important, since they are officially "candidates" for only a month before the elections and involved in campaigning during that time. The letters will be posted on the day following the elections and respondents asked to reply within a month.

The redesigned 2006 survey includes more detailed questions about candidate recruitment. Broadening the scope of our survey will allow me to consider the possible effects upon candidate recruitment of the urban/rural dimension, geography and the nature of party political control. Such factors could not be explored properly in my within-county 2003 survey.

The survey responses are entered onto an SPSS file and the data analysis is in three stages. First is univariate; for the frequency distributions and the representativeness of respondents. The second stage is a series of bivariate analyses; for example, to see if there is a relationship between gender and motivation or attitudes. This involves cross-tabulations and chi-square tests for significance. The third analyses are loglinear models to extend the exploration to three variables simultaneously to test for significant or non-significant associations.

Augmenting the quantitative data analysis the research continues with a number of semi-structured interviews with councillors and unelected candidates, to obtain more individual information about motives for standing and experience as a councillor, (Silverman, 2000, Bryman 2001), (see chapter 7). The survey respondents are asked if they are willing to be interviewed and all who volunteer will constitute the sampling frame. This will be a non-random sample, aiming to

include new councillors and those who have served for many years and a small number of unelected candidates. Interviewees will be selected from sub-sets to reflect the proportion of councillors in urban, rural councils and political parties. The analysis will be continuous during the interview stage to take advantage of opportunities to explore emerging themes in subsequent interviews. It would then be possible to compare the personal circumstances of men and women alongside social, political and local factors.

3.5 Analysis of Local Election Results

Firstly, the secondary data analysis of aggregate election results held by the LGC Elections Centre will facilitate the identification of historical trends within parties and /or authorities over time. The local election results for this analysis are from the London boroughs, metropolitan boroughs and shire districts. The Local Elections Database includes results from every London borough from 1964 until 2006. The non metropolitan district councils and thirty-six metropolitan boroughs in urban areas of England outside London were created by the Local Government Act 1972. The analysis runs from 1973, the first election in these new authorities, until 2007. These historical data will be examined to detect and highlight any patterns in the proportion of women candidates and councillors over this period.

During the early stages of this research I had hoped to include the results from the County Boroughs and look back at the London boroughs to the beginning of the twentieth century. The election results are known but the gender of all candidates is not on record. I have looked back at the election results as reported in local newspapers unfortunately they are not reliable sources. The reports vary across the country, sometimes first names are listed but often it is only initials and surnames. I then contacted a number of

authorities to see if the councils had more information, generally they have complete historical records of councillors but not all candidates. Therefore, the analysis was restricted to the authorities and years for which I have reliable data, beginning with London from 1964.

In 1964 women candidates comprised approximately 16% of all local election candidates in England and that proportion has doubled in forty years. The average proportion across London in 1964 was higher at 20%, (see section 4.5.2 and Figure 4.1), although there was a wide variation between boroughs. The proportion of women standing for local elections has always been higher than for Parliament. Currently women candidates comprise 30% of local election candidates in all types of authority. Overall the proportion of women contesting elections in the London boroughs is consistently higher than Metropolitan, District, Unitary or County Council elections.

The 32 London boroughs hold whole-council local elections every four years. This analysis will examine the proportion of women candidates standing for election in London (see section 4.5). First will be a description of the increase in women candidates on average across all London boroughs and differences between the recruitment of women by the main parties. Are there any differences in the trends of recruitment between the main parties over forty years? This is followed by an account of women's electoral success in London. In particular is there any association between a high proportion of women candidates for a party and that party's election success? Are women selected to contest winnable seats? (see section 4.5.2) Next, is a closer examination of four boroughs; Camden and Kensington and Chelsea were selected because they had the highest proportions of women candidates, (see section 4.5.3) and

Hounslow and Tower Hamlets, the lowest for elections in 2006, (see sections 4.5.4).

The 149 shire district councils selected for analysis also hold all-council elections every four years, (see section 4.6) These non metropolitan district councils were created by the Local Government Act 1972, and the analysis runs from 1973 until 2007. The average proportion of women candidates across district councils has risen gradually from 16% in 1973 and almost doubled to 30% in 2007, (see section 4.6 & Figure 4.2). I begin by describing the presence of women candidates across the shire districts and comparing the similarities and differences between the proportions of women who stand for each party. Next is a comparison of women's electoral success, and if there seems to be any association between the party that wins the most seats and the proportion of women elected for that party. Having looked at women candidates and councillors across the shire districts, six were selected for closer examination. The districts selected for more detailed comparison are Spelthorne, Guildford and South Bucks with high proportions of women standing, (see section 4.6.2) and Teesdale, Eden and Corby with low proportions of women candidates, (see section 4.6.3).

The Local Government Act 1972 created 36 Metropolitan boroughs in urban areas of England outside London. This analysis of women candidates and councillors also covers elections from 1973 until 2007, (see section 4.7). Elections for these boroughs are held in a four year cycle but unlike the London boroughs and all-out district councils, Metropolitan authorities have more frequent elections. One-third of the council is elected in each of three successive years with no borough elections in the fourth year. The first election to establish the new Metropolitan councils in 1973 was a whole-council election.

The other whole council elections were in 1982, 1984 and 2004 following boundary changes.

The average proportion of women candidates in the Metropolitan boroughs has risen from 12% to 30% but for some boroughs there is extreme variation, (see Figure 4.3). I begin by describing the presence of women candidates across all Metropolitan boroughs and comparing the similarities and differences between the proportions of women who stand for each party. Next is a comparison of women's electoral success for the main parties. In each election we can see whether the proportion of women elected for each of the main parties is associated with a party winning most seats or being second or third placed.

Having looked at women candidates and councillors across the metropolitan boroughs, four boroughs were selected for closer examination. North Tyneside and Wirral were chosen because they currently have high proportions of women standing, (see section 4.7.2) and Oldham and Knowsley have low proportions, (see section 4.7.3). The analysis of women's participation in each district is prefaced by a paragraph describing the borough's location in England and noting the main socio-economic indicators from census data. This information is incorporated in the comparisons of districts and women's electoral success.

3. 6 Local Election Candidate Survey

The second line of research inquiry is a national survey of candidates contesting the 2006 local elections in England. A questionnaire will be sent to a sample of candidates standing in local elections for 176 authorities covering the London and metropolitan boroughs together with a range of unitary and shire district authorities.

Local elections in England are usually held annually on the first Thursday in May. Most local councillors are elected for a fixed term of four years, except when elected in a by-election or as a result of boundary changes. The frequency of elections varies between and within authority types. Table 1 below shows that 243 authorities hold whole council elections once every four years, seven district councils hold two elections in every four years and elect half of the council at one time. For 137 authorities one third of the seats will be up for election annually for three years and followed by no election for that council in the fourth year.

Table 3.1 Summary of local government electoral cycle in England by authority type.

<i>Authority Type</i>	<i>Thirds</i>	<i>Halves</i>	<i>Whole</i>	<i>Total</i>
County Council	-	-	34	34
District borough	82	7	149	238
Unitary council	19	-	27	46
London borough	-	-	32	32
Metropolitan borough	36	-	-	36
Total	137	7	243	387

Source: The Electoral Commission, 2003

Theoretically, the target population for this research is all the candidates standing in the 176 local authorities conducting “all-out” or partial elections in May 2006. It was estimated that approximately 15,000 individuals would contest these elections; this estimate was based on the numbers standing for election in most of these authorities four years before. The local authorities are required to publish the names and addresses of the candidates. This occurs early in April approximately one month before election date. In March 2006 I sent an e-mail request to each authority explaining the purpose of the research

and the necessity of acquiring candidates' home addresses. I asked if they could supply a copy of the Statement of Persons Nominated for election when it was released. Most of the authorities either sent the list electronically or by post and others advised that it was available on their council web-site. Unfortunately a few authorities only published a list of names and despite requesting fuller information it was not received. The actual number of candidates this year was 15,250, very close to the estimated figure.

3. 6.1 The Survey Sample

The sample size was determined by practical considerations, the cost of printing and posting the questionnaires and most importantly the time involved in compiling address labels for each candidate. Whilst taking account of practical considerations all the resources spent in preparing the questionnaire would be to little avail without an appropriate sample of candidates. There is no definitive answer as to what constitutes a good sample size and an acceptable response rate. In general it is the absolute size of a sample that is important not its relative size, (Bryman 2001). It has become conventional in research report publications to find a sample size of at least 1,000 respondents. The chief reason for this is that incremental rises in sample size, from 100 -1000 proportionately increases the likely precision and reduces sampling errors. However sampling beyond 1,000 becomes relatively uneconomic because this effect diminishes, therefore time and costs remain constant with less improvement in precision. The analysis of this survey will involve comparisons of sub-sets within the data and therefore it is essential to be able to split the file in several ways, e.g. party and gender and still have sufficiently large numbers of respondents in each group for inferential analyses. For this reason and to compensate for non responses 3,000 copies of the questionnaire were printed.

The first posting numbered 2,800, in order to retain copies that could be sent out with a reminder letter if there should be a systematic non-response from any specific group.

It was estimated that 2,800 candidates would constitute approximately one fifth of the candidates standing in 2006. The names and addresses were obtained from the local authorities. The order in which the local authorities' lists were selected was random, depending upon when they arrived. The fifth candidate was selected from the first list and thereafter every fifth name continuously through the lists. The name and address file also contained the party affiliation, the local authority type for the wards contested and whether the candidate was male or female. Once the list of names had reached 280 the relative proportions were checked to see if there appeared to be any apparent bias in this system. The names are published in alphabetical order for each ward but the numbers of candidates standing in the wards vary depending upon type of local authority, vacancies this year and party competition. It seemed that selecting each fifth name resulted in a reasonable spread. Particular attention was paid to the proportions of candidates from the main parties, candidate sex and the distribution within authority types, since these would be key variables for future analyses and measures of representativeness of the sample, (see section 5.3.1). Although this initial check was conducted upon 10% of the sample, the results were close to the expected percentages for this population, based on previous records. This selection method was continued with repeated checks on the distribution of the known variables of the sample. The surveys were posted on the election day and the actual characteristics of all the candidates standing in 2006 were not known until some time after the election

when the results were collated at the Elections Centre, (Rallings & Thrasher, 2006)

3. 6. 2 *The Questionnaire*

Responses collected from the postal questionnaire provide all of the primary quantitative data for this research project. Therefore it is important at this stage of the research to spend time preparing the questions, format and considering the best ways to achieve a good response rate. (The final version of the questionnaire is appendix I). The covering letter explains the purpose of this survey and informs candidates of the distinctive approach of this research that includes local election candidates, whereas most previous studies have been limited to councillors. The candidates are informed they have been selected from the Statements of Persons Nominated supplied by the local authorities. The letter explains how the project is funded and all responses would be treated confidentially and not disclosed to others. A freepost addressed envelope is included for replies.

This is the first survey sent to a large sample of candidates in England; however the design of the survey is informed by previous studies. Some of the questions were replicated from The British Representation Studies, (BRS 2001 & 2005) to facilitate comparisons between two types of candidates. Questions were also incorporated from the successful sections of the survey sent to Devon candidates in 2003. These previously tried and tested elements are supplemented by new topics that reflect the recent prominence of measures to increase the diversity of elected representatives debated by national politicians and academics. Earlier versions of the questionnaire were sent to experts in this field for comments, including two of the authors of the BRS. Their suggestions for improvements were incorporated into the final version.

Most of the questions are “closed” but there are opportunities for candidates to add other comments if they wish. The questionnaire is divided into sections beginning with previous political experience and community involvement, followed by questions concerning the reasons for their first candidacy. The next section explores the opinions of party candidates in the selection process for 2006. Candidates are then asked how confident they had been of winning their seat and about campaigning this year. The next section moves away from personal experience and is intended to gauge candidates’ opinions of modernisation initiatives in local government. The final section asks about personal characteristics, including a candidate’s age education and occupation.

The main aims of the questionnaire are to learn more about the type of people who stand for local elections and their reasons for standing. There have been surveys of councilors, (I&DeA 2001, 2003 & 2005) but no previous studies with all candidates. The respondents would necessarily be a “snapshot” of the 2006 candidates; many of whom would have previous experience of elections and some would be present or past councillors and others will be first-time candidates. In order to establish the extent of election experience and allow comparisons between councillors and unelected candidates, the questionnaire begins by asking about previous candidacies and election success, (see section 5.5). The next question about previous political and community experience is designed to test whether these candidates conform to the idea that people who stand for local election will also be members of associations or active in community life. The Citizen Audit, for example concluded in 2004, that it is,

“professional and managerial workers, middle –income and richest households and the well –educated who are more likely to be engaged in politics and voluntary activities” (Pattie et al. 2004: 107)

We know that councillors are disproportionately drawn from well-educated and professional or managerial occupations but these responses will show if most unelected candidates are drawn from a similar background, (see section 5.4.1). We can also see if candidates are involved in voluntary community activities or is it only their party membership that influenced the candidacy, (see sections 2.3 and 5.5).

The second section asks about the candidates' experience standing for the first time. The first question asks why they first stood as a candidate, to establish whether there are differences between the reasons for standing between men and women, (see section 5.6). Apart from the reasons for standing, candidates are asked about the levels of support they received from others around them. Next, candidates are asked whether that initial decision was entirely their own, a consequence of being approached or a personal decision with assistance from others, (see section 5.6).

The third section concerns the party selection of candidates, beginning by asking about competition for seats this year and if the candidate had applied for more than one seat, (see section 5.7). Candidates are asked why they were selected to contest that seat and what other factors may have contributed to their successful selection and their opinions of the selection process, (see section 5.7). What we do not know is whether the seat is chosen predominantly by the candidate or are individuals placed in seats by the parties and if so, why?

The fourth section is for all candidates and asks first if they could say how confident they felt of winning the seat, (see section 5.7). Although they would be completing this survey after the election results were known it is hoped that these responses would allow comparisons between the candidates who stood expecting to win and those who were prepared to stand for other

reasons. The aggregate data showed that many women were selected to contest difficult-to-win seats, I would like to know why people stand when they expect to lose the election and do many women choose to stand in these seats. The next questions are intended to see how actively they campaigned, by public meetings, telephone calls or visiting households. They are asked if they had produced a campaign leaflet and what information they included, (see section 5.8)

The fifth section contains questions about the image of local government and councillors in particular. The public image of local government is poor and there is a lack of public knowledge about the role of councilors, (see section 2.12). Whereas most of the survey has been about the candidates' own experiences, this section explores their attitudes towards larger structural challenges. They are asked why they think relatively few people come forward to be candidates, (see section 5.11) and asked for their views on some of the proposed modernisation initiatives in general, (see section 5.9). Lastly there are direct questions about the numbers of women candidates, why more women do not stand and how they view positive action to improve those numbers, (see section 5.10). There follows a short section for those who had been councillors previously and asks about the amount of time spent on council business, (see section 5.12). Finally the candidates are asked for personal information, sex, age, ethnicity, education and occupation, (see section 5.4). This is the first time this information on candidates has been collected on large scale. We can compare the personal profiles of unelected candidates and councillors, (see section 5.4.1)

3. 7 Semi-structured Interviews

The final phase of data collection and analysis is a number of individual qualitative semi-structured telephone interviews with councillors and unelected candidates to provide more information concerning personal circumstances and opportunities that contributed to their decision to stand for election and to continue in office. A small sample of survey respondents will be sent an e-mail asking if they would agree to a telephone interview. The email message will explain the purpose and substance of the telephone interview. This is a non-probability sample but intends to reflect the difference in proportion of men and women who stand for election and the spread of candidates for different types of authority. The proportion of interviewees from the three main parties will mirror that party's share of candidates nationally. Additionally there will be a small number of interviews with councillors from the minor parties who contest elections across England; the Green Party, UKIP, the BNP and an Independent councillor.

The questions are open-ended and explore the following themes. First is their own experience of being recruited, (see sections 2.11 & 7.5.1), of recruiting others and what prevents people from standing, (see sections 2.12 & 7.5.2). Second is the availability of information about the role of councillors prior to standing and whether this information for candidates should be provided by councils or political parties, (see section 7.5.3). Third is to ascertain how they think the under-representation of women, Black and minority ethnic, (BME) and young councillors should be addressed? (see sections 2.12 & 7.5.4) and whether it matters if the councillors are men or women, young or old? The fourth theme is to examine how councillors think their councils could better support them in their role as democratic representatives, (see section 7.5.5).

Fifth is how they think the role of being a councillor could be made more attractive to the public and whether this should be the responsibility of local councils or political parties, (see section 7.5.6). Lastly all interviewees are asked if there was any topic not covered that they would like to mention.

This research strategy employs multiple methods to “triangulate” the research findings and investigate the research questions from the “macro” level of aggregate election results and the survey and the micro level of interviews. This demonstrates a commitment to problem-driven rather than method driven work, (Krook & Squires 2006). This approach reflects a preference for and belief in the strength of methodological pluralism to investigate substantive political problems.

Chapter 4: Women in English Local Government.

4.1 Introduction

The last chapter described the research design, rationale and the triangulation of methods used to address the research questions. This chapter concerns the first method; secondary analysis of the local election results. The purpose of this exploration is to identify historical trends within parties and authorities over time. This is an important preliminary stage of the research which sets women's under-representation in the context of local government.

I begin in the first section by looking back to the nineteenth century and women's transition from informal philanthropic parish work into elected office in the emergent authorities of English local government. In the second section I show that the numbers of women standing for election slowly increased throughout the twentieth century. I am fortunate to have a complete set of election results for the City of Birmingham since 1911-2000 that illustrates the rise of women candidates.

The overall proportion of women selected and elected from English authorities since 1973 is provided by an article by Borisyuk et al. which looks at overall trends in the recruitment and retention of women among the various types of local authority. It is the different proportions of women selected and elected between types of authority, the London boroughs, shire districts and metropolitan authorities that constitute the main analysis of this chapter. The proportion of women standing and elected is then explored in more detail by examining a number of councils with higher than average proportions of women candidates and those below average.

4.2 History of Women in Local Government

Over fifty years before women were able to vote in parliamentary elections and stand for parliament they were holding elected office in the agencies and authorities that preceded local authorities. Towards the end of the 19th century women were elected to the London vestries, school and Poor Law boards, parish, rural and urban district councils, (Hollis 1987). Our system of local government developed gradually and altered to meet changing circumstances, especially population migration caused by the industrial revolution. By the early 1800s the three geographical layers of local government that we would recognise today had emerged, parishes, counties and boroughs.

Two major reform Acts of the 1830s were designed to introduce a more coherent system. The Poor Law Amendment Act (1834) created unions of parishes with elected boards of guardians for administering poor relief. The Municipal Corporation Act (1835) created multipurpose elected authorities and the principle of directly elected borough councils replaced the previous system of appointed officials. The franchise at this time was restricted to male ratepayers with over three years residence. In 1888 the Local Government Act established sixty-two elected county councils and sixty-one county boroughs in England and Wales. In 1894, 535 urban district councils, 472 rural district councils and 270 non-county borough councils were established within the county councils areas, (Keith-Lucas & Richards, 1978)

The women's movement at this time was more concerned with improving the education and employment opportunities for women rather than demands for votes. But during the 1860s there was increasing pressure for extending the

parliamentary franchise for men and women. In 1869 the qualifications for voting rights were amended so that unmarried women ratepayers had the same municipal franchise as men ratepayers. Women comprised 17% of the electorate, although in some larger cities the proportion was as high as 25%. Women could stand for election to the Poor boards but not for the borough councils. The Elementary Education Act of 1870 allowed women to vote and stand for election to school boards. The women who came forward to be candidates in these early years were continuing a long tradition of philanthropic work by wealthy women. Most were well-educated, frequently from political families and accustomed to voluntary work. They became known as "ladies elect" because of their superior social status. From the historical accounts of these early women candidates, the two strands of modern interpretations of representation are apparent. From the beginning the women who supported the suffrage movement argued that women should have equal rights with men and stood for elections to ensure that women participated in public life. They were campaigning for equality of numerical or descriptive representation. However, there were also women who saw local government service as an extension of philanthropic work. They claimed that women are equal but different and bring a distinctive perspective to local government and should be present to represent women's issues and make a substantive difference to the lives of women and children. Late Victorian and Edwardian philanthropy and local government developed alongside and enlarged each other, (Hollis 1987). Prior to the First World War there were three large formal organisations that linked women's voluntary work and local government, the Charity Organisation Society, the National Union of Women Workers and the Guilds of Help. Alongside providing relief for the poor they encouraged women to stand for local election; through

this experience of voluntary work many women acquired confidence and knowledge. These formal organisations also provided training in public speaking, social networks for women and support for them as candidates. The Women's Local Government Society founded in 1888 campaigned for twenty years for women's rights to stand in local elections and for married women ratepayers to be able to vote in local elections.

In August 1907 the Qualification of Women (County and Borough Councils) Act was passed. It allowed women ratepayers to stand for election to the borough and county councils. The number of women elected at first was very small. In November 1907 seventeen women candidates stood and five were elected. By 1914 there were approximately fifty women councillors (Hollis 1987). There has been a steady increase in the proportion of women standing for local election since 1907. Local government has always attracted a higher proportion of women candidates than parliamentary elections in England. This is not unusual for women's representation; the law of minority attrition applies. As the legislative assembly becomes more important, the proportion of women becomes smaller.

A study in 1964 (as cited in Borisyuk et al. 2007), estimated that 16% of all local election candidates were women, more than three times as many as fought parliamentary seats at the time. In English local elections across all authorities women now comprise approximately 30% of candidates and that figure has remained constant for about ten years. Although historical accounts of the early successes of women candidates and councillors exist there has been no systematic collection of the women candidates who stood for election since 1907. Unfortunately it is common practice for local papers to publish

election results by recording only the surname and initials of the candidates. Many councils have good historical records of the full names of their previous councillors but are unable to supply details of unelected candidates. However, there is one exceptional collection of results from the City of Birmingham from 1911 – 2000. The election results have been collected by Christopher Phillips and published by the LGC Elections Centre, (Phillips 2000). It is a complete set of city elections and by-elections for this period. Most importantly for this research, the collection includes the forenames of all candidates, therefore I can chart the rise of women candidates.

4.3 The City of Birmingham

In 1911 the Greater Birmingham Act extended the city boundaries, new vacant seats were available and in the first election to the new council one woman was elected. Ellen Pinsent was elected in Edgabston. She was a city councillor for only two years and then continued to work with the NSPCC. Her success in 1911 is notable because she was married when elected. The qualification of married women to stand was unclear but the electoral returning officers allowed her candidacy. During the passage of the 1907 Bill the Women's Local Government Society, (WLGS) wanted to establish equal rights for married women to vote and stand for election. They were warned that any extension of rights for married women would be unpopular in parliament. Pursuing this cause could jeopardise the passing of the legislation and the WLGS were advised to wait until later.

In a by-election in November 1911 Miss Marjorie Pugh became the second woman elected in Birmingham. She stood as an Independent candidate but campaigned for the "greater involvement of women in local politics", (Phillips

2000). The first two women elected typify the type of women who were involved in local politics at this time. Ellen Pinsent had been a guardian of the Poor Board and worked for better conditions for children and Marjorie Pugh stood as a suffragist but once elected she was instrumental in slum clearance and the provision of council housing. Before the start of the First World War and the suspension of elections there was only one more woman councillor, Clara Martineau, whose family were involved in local politics.

Table 4.1 shows the steady rise of women candidates in Birmingham from 1911. A very small number of women stand before 1920 and the proportion increases slowly over the next thirty years. After 1950 that steady increase slows down and there is very little progress until the 1980s but this is not sustained and drops slightly during the 1990s.

Table 4.1. The number and percentage of candidates in each decade in Birmingham City by sex.

Decade	Female candidates		Male candidates	
1911-1920	8	2%	384	98%
1921-1930	43	7.6%	522	92.4%
1931-1940	59	11%	477	89%
1942-1950	69	14.6%	403	85.4%
1951-1960	159	17.2%	764	82.8%
1961-1970	196	16.3%	1010	83.3%
1971-1980	24	18.7%	1058	81.3%
1980-1991	309	24.8%	937	75.2%
1991-2000	282	23.9%	896	76.1%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Although we do not have accurate records of the gender of candidates across other authorities in England for all of this period we can compare Birmingham with other authorities from 1973 onwards. We know that the proportion of women standing across all authorities in 1973 was about 17% and by the mid 1980s it was 20% and during this period the proportion of women

candidates in Birmingham is about average. By 1995 the national average had risen to just under 30%, so latterly the proportion of women standing in Birmingham is below the average for all authorities. This may reflect the demographic profile of the city. Birmingham has a relatively high percentage of ethnic minority residents in some wards and few women stand for election in those wards.

4.4 Women Candidates and Councillors in England 1973 - 2003

Borisyuk et al. (2007) describe the recruitment and retention of women candidates and councillors in England from 1973-2003. During this period the proportion of women standing has doubled. The rate of increase was especially rapid in the second half of the 1980s. The three main parties recruited more candidates but the Liberal Democrats chose proportionally more than either Labour or Conservatives. Also there is evidence that when one party selects a women there is a good chance that its rival will do the same. However, women candidates were selected more frequently than men to fight difficult-to-win seats. Therefore the proportion of women elected did not match the rise in women candidates. There is no evidence that voters discriminated against women candidates in fact in multi-member electoral districts, sometimes women candidates received more votes than men on the same party slate. Nevertheless the proportion of women candidates and councillors remains relatively low. Currently women candidates comprise 30% of local election candidates in all types of authority. Overall the proportion of women contesting elections in the London boroughs is consistently higher than metropolitan, district, unitary or county council elections, (Borisyuk et al. 2007). Borisyuk's analysis of this large data set concerns the progress of women selected and elected since 1973. The focus of the analysis is on identifying overall trends

and differences in women's participation for the main parties and between types of authority. This provides an interesting account of women in local government but at a very high level of aggregate data. I would like to discover more about the differences between the recruitment of women in order to develop a more fine-grained analysis of the data in individual authorities.

The following three sections of the chapter explore the recruitment of women by type of authority and then within those types, explore in closer detail a range of authorities with proportions of women candidates that are higher or lower than the average. Each section begins with a description of the rise in the proportion of women candidates and councillors. This is followed by a description of the proportion of women candidates across these authorities and differences between the recruitment of women by the main parties. Are there any differences in the trends of recruitment between the main parties during this period? Women's electoral success in these authorities is examined. In particular is there any association between a high proportion of women candidates for a party and election success? Are women selected to contest winnable seats? Finally in each section, local authorities that have high or low proportions of women candidates are selected for closer analysis from the London boroughs, shire districts and metropolitan boroughs.

4.5 London Boroughs

4.5.1 Introduction

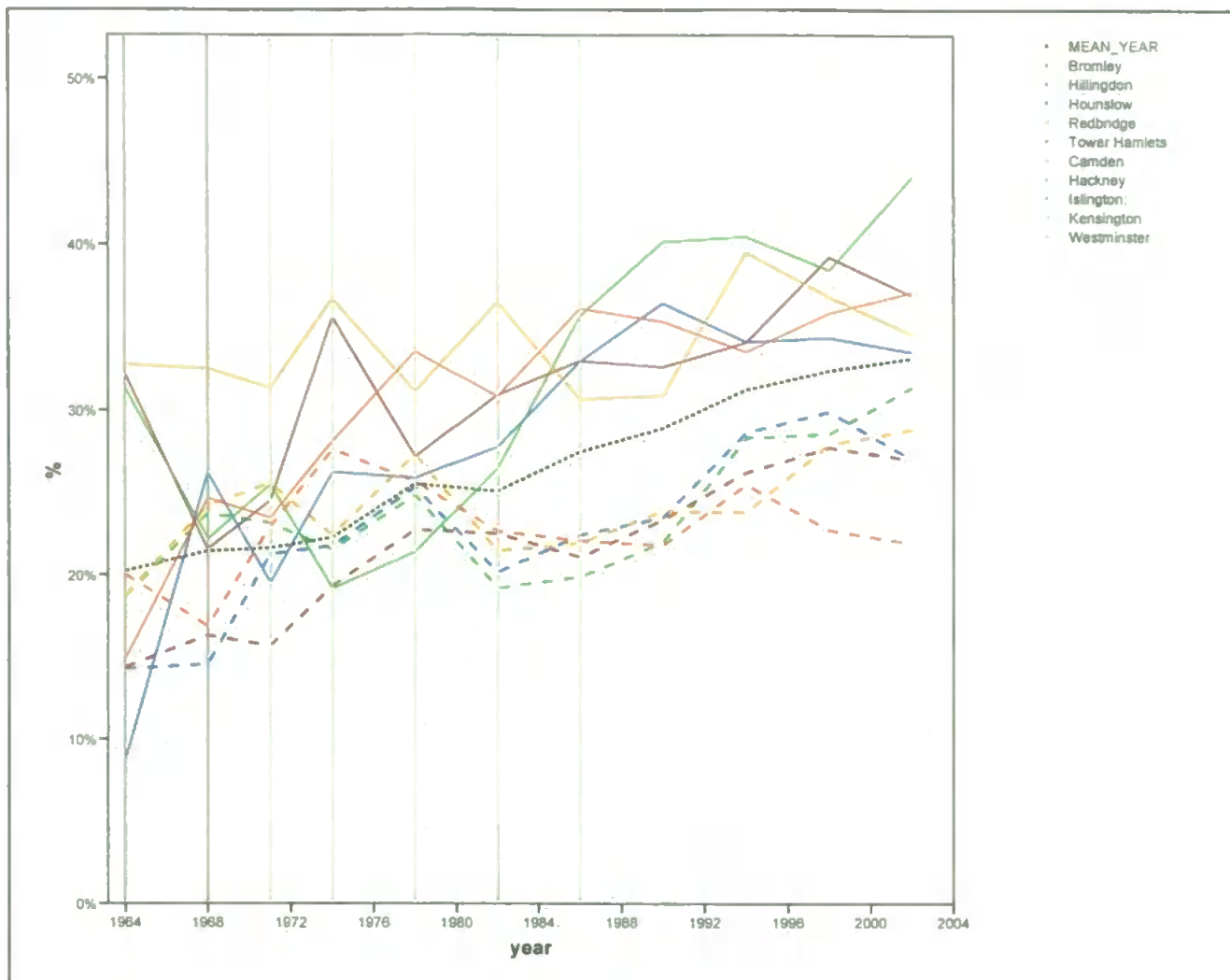
The thirty two London boroughs hold whole-council local elections once every four years. This analysis will examine the proportion of women candidates standing for election in London from 1964-2006. First will be a description of the increase in women candidates on average across all London boroughs and

differences between the recruitment of women by the main parties. Are there any differences in the trends of recruitment between the main parties over forty years?

This is followed by an account of women's electoral success in London. In particular is there any association between a high proportion of women candidates for a party and election success? Are women selected to contest winnable seats? Next, is a closer examination of four boroughs. Camden and Kensington and Chelsea were selected because they had the highest proportions of women candidates and Hounslow and Tower Hamlets, the lowest for elections in 2006. London boroughs have multi-member wards, historically some had four seats but successive boundary changes and reorganisation in London means boroughs now have two or three but most wards have three seats.

4.5.2 Women Candidates and Councillors in London

In 1964 women candidates comprised approximately 16% of all local election candidates in England and that proportion has doubled in forty years. The average proportion across London in 1964 was higher at 20%, (see figure 4.1), although there was a wide variation between the thirty-two boroughs.

Figure 4.1 Women Candidates in London Borough Elections

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

In Figure 4.1, the dotted black line shows the mean number of women candidates across all boroughs. The solid lines show the five boroughs with the highest proportions of women candidates and the five broken lines are the lowest.

In Hillingdon there were less than 10% women candidates in 1964 but Kensington, Islington and Camden were already above 30% which is close to the average proportion for women in England today. As Figure 4.1 shows the average proportion of women candidates across London has risen gradually from 20% in 1964 to over 30% in 2006. Up until the early 1970s there was a

very slight increase, followed by a steep rise for two elections. From 1982 the average proportion has risen steadily but individual boroughs continued to rise and fall. In 2006 we still see that overall difference of over 20 percentage points between the highest and lowest boroughs in their proportion of women candidates. Briefly, during the late 1970s there was less variation and the gap reduced to about 10%, we now look at the recruitment of women across London by the main parties.

Table 4.2 shows the number and percentage of women candidates standing each election year by political parties. The Conservative and Labour parties have a very similar pattern of recruitment for women candidates over this period with only one or two percentage points difference, except in 2006. For the 2006 London elections Labour aimed to field at least one women candidate in each ward. The Labour party has always fielded more candidates than the Conservatives in London. The Liberal Democrats usually have a greater proportion of women but they do not contest most seats before 1982, thereafter their candidate numbers are very close to the Conservative candidates. Even though the candidate numbers for the Green party are relatively low they have the highest proportion of women candidates in most elections. The proportion of women standing for other minor parties is similar to Conservatives. The proportion of women standing as Independent candidates does not match the main parties.

Table 4.2. Women Candidates in the London Boroughs by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1964	368 22%	370 21%	232 0%	- -	9 14%	57 15%
1968	361 21%	396 21%	200 5%	- -	8 12%	69 18%
1971	400 23%	383 21%	135 2%	- -	9 17%	75 20%
1974	380 22%	376 20%	305 4%	- -	5 14%	115 28%
1978	435 24%	441 23%	346 5%	1 100%	17 28%	232 24%
1982	473 26%	484 25%	443 4%	18 37%	18 19%	65 24%
1986	488 27%	516 27%	529 9%	72 43%	16 18%	26 16%
1990	516 28%	508 27%	408 4%	143 33%	12 18%	84 27%
1994	552 30%	557 29%	559 5%	90 41%	33 25%	32 29%
1998	552 31%	579 30%	554 5%	102 40%	21 18%	50 31%
2002	517 29%	581 31%	563 8%	215 41%	23 24%	127 33%
2006	534 29%	600 33%	574 7%	229 40%	36 21%	144 30%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

In a year when a party had no candidates standing, the cell will be blank. In a year when a party has candidates but no women it will be shown by 0 and 0%. All the other tables of women candidates are so organised.

Table 4.3 shows the number and percentage of women elected each election year by political parties. Overall, the proportions of women elected for Labour and the Conservatives are lower than the proportion of women selected but it is not a great difference. The differential has reduced from about four percentage points in the 1960s to one or two points latterly. The proportion of women councillors for both parties is similar. The Liberal Democrat party has been represented by more than 100 women councillors since 1994, fewer than the other two main parties. The proportion of women winning in London for the Liberal Democrats is slightly higher than for Labour or Conservative. There is more difference between the proportions of women standing and elected for the

smaller parties. The Green party have a high proportion of women candidates but they do not win any seats until 1998. Relatively few councillors are Independent or from the minor parties but for some years the proportion of minor party and Independent women elected exceeds their proportion of women candidates, eg.1990 and 2006.

Table 4. 3. Women Councillors in the London Boroughs by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1964	114 17%	194 17%	1 6%	- -	0 0%	1 2%
1968	277 19%	55 16%	0 0%	- -	1 25%	8 13%
1971	117 20%	203 17%	2 22%	- -	- -	3 8%
1974	139 19%	193 18%	9 33%	- -	- -	7 19%
1978	200 21%	179 20%	10 33%	- -	5 42%	2 8%
1982	216 22%	173 22%	22 18%	- -	5 36%	0 0%
1986	154 23%	245 26%	66 27%	- -	2 22%	1 7%
1990	191 26%	230 25%	72 32%	- -	2 33%	8 32%
1994	146 28%	285 27%	103 32%	- -	0 0%	9 32%
1998	145 27%	313 30%	101 34%	0 0%	2 50%	8 36%
2002	182 28%	256 30%	102 33%	0 0%	- -	11 33%
2006	232 30%	240 35%	104 33%	8 67%	1 33%	23 38%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

In a year when a party wins no seats, the cell will be blank. In a year when a party wins seats but no women are elected it will be shown by 0 and 0%. All the other tables of women councillors are so organised.

Having looked at women candidates and councillors across the London boroughs, four boroughs were selected for closer examination. Figure 4.1 displayed the five boroughs with the highest and five with the lowest proportions of women standing. An exploration of the proportions of women candidates and

councillors by party in four individual boroughs may reveal reasons why there is such variation between boroughs.

Camden and Kensington and Chelsea were chosen because they currently have high proportions of women standing and Hounslow and Tower Hamlets have low proportions. The analysis of women's participation in each borough is prefaced by a paragraph describing the borough's location in London and describing the main socio-economic indicators.

4.5.3 London boroughs with high proportions of women candidates

Camden.

Camden is an inner London borough to the north of the West End and City of London. The borough encompasses the former metropolitan boroughs of Hampstead, Holborn and St. Pancras. Camden has a large business and legal practice area in Holborn. It is a popular tourist area with the British Museum, British Library and many theatres. The University of London and two teaching hospitals, University College and the Royal Free are major employers.

Whereas the recruitment by the Conservative and Labour parties was very similar across all boroughs the pattern is not so clear in Camden. The Labour party has controlled Camden council after each election except 1968 when the Conservative party was the largest. Table 4.4 shows that after starting with above average women candidates the proportion of women standing for these two parties drops to a low of 15% for Labour and 12% for Conservatives. During the 1970s the proportion of women candidates in Camden drops below the London average until 1982. In the 1980s the Labour party is first to increase recruitment of women, just over 40% of Labour party candidates are women in

1982. During the 1980s the Conservative party attracts more women but does not usually match Labour. Camden's relatively high percentage of women candidates is enhanced by Liberal Democrats throughout these elections and Greens latterly. Both parties are very successful at recruiting women to stand, in elections before 1982 the number of Liberal candidates varied, they ranged from 25% -60% of the numbers fielded by Labour or Conservative. From 1982 onwards Liberals are close to contesting every seat. The Green party's first candidates are in 1982 and numbers are small but recently they have the same number of candidates as the main parties and percentage of women with 59% in 2002 and 50% in 2006. Figure 4.1 shows Camden to have the highest percentage of women candidates in London. This top position is certainly boosted by the presence of Liberal Democrats and Greens, for although the Conservative and Labour party have above average women candidates the percentage is not remarkably high. Also some percentage increases in the chart reflect the effect of women standing for minor parties or as Independent candidates, (e.g. 1974).

Table 4.4 Women Candidates in Camden by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1964	21 35%	15 25%	14 45%	- -	1 25%	2 14%
1968	12 20%	13 22%	7 23%	- -	0 0%	4 40%
1971	15 25%	11 18%	6 43%	- -	1 33%	4 50%
1974	9 15%	7 12%	14 37%	- -	1 100%	2 15%
1978	10 17%	9 15%	9 43%	- -	0 0%	8 30%
1982	7 12%	25 42%	16 27%	1 25%	0 0%	0 0%
1986	16 27%	24 41%	21 38%	4 100%	0 0%	0 0%
1990	19 32%	21 36%	19 46%	15 50%	- -	14 47%
1994	21 36%	16 27%	30 54%	10 50%	6 55%	- -
1998	20 34%	21 36%	25 44%	8 62%	1 17%	0 0%
2002	17 31%	22 41%	23 43%	32 59%	1 33%	6 60%
2006	16 30%	18 33%	18 33%	27 50%	0 0%	0 0%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

As Table 4.5 shows Camden councillors were either Conservative or Labour until 1986. The proportions of Labour women elected are close to the proportion of women selected. In some years the women elected exceeds the proportion of women candidates for Labour. The proportions of Conservative women councillors are not consistent with the proportions of women selected, often with large differences. Although the Liberal Democrats have a consistently high proportion of women candidates, the party did not win any seats until 1986, at which election they had two Liberal Democrat councillors and their first woman councillor. The responses from the local election survey in Devon, (Shears 2004) showed that many women are prepared to stand to support their party but don't wish to win and this may explain the willingness of women to stand for this party. The recruitment of women candidates by the Labour and Conservative parties is more interesting, the council is dominated by these parties and many of their candidates would expect to be councillors. For the first ten years the Conservatives have an overall higher proportion of women amongst their councillors than do Labour. The proportions of women councillors for both parties increase in the 1980s; even though Labour's share fluctuates it remains high. The variation in the proportion of women councillors for Conservatives is extreme and probably affected by the electoral success of the Liberal Democrats since 1994.

Table 4.5 Women Councillors in Camden by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1964	4 15%	6 18%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1968	9 21%	1 6%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1971	3 27%	8 16%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1974	2 17%	7 15%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1978	1 4%	7 21%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1982	2 8%	14 42%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1986	5 38%	18 41%	1 50%	- -	- -	- -
1990	6 40%	13 31%	- -	- -	- -	2 100%
1994	5 71%	14 30%	3 60%	- -	- -	- -
1998	2 20%	16 37%	4 67%	- -	- -	- -
2002	2 18%	16 46%	4 50%	- -	- -	- -
2006	4 29%	7 39%	5 25%	1 50%	- -	- -

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Kensington and Chelsea.

This borough is situated to the west of Westminster in Central London, formerly two separate metropolitan boroughs. It is an urban area and the most densely populated local authority in the UK. The borough is known for the museums, department stores and foreign embassies located here. It is an exclusive residential area and according to the 2001 census has the largest number of high-earners (>£60,000 pa) of any local government authority in England. It also has the highest number of workers in the financial sector and lowest in retail.

Kensington and Chelsea had the highest proportion of women candidates standing in any London borough in 1964 and the proportion has remained above average throughout these forty years. Table 4.6 shows that the three main parties maintained a high proportion of women candidate for all

elections, overall there is less variation than in Camden. The Green party contest elections from 1986 and increase the proportion of women standing in this borough.

Table 4.6 Women Candidates in Kensington & Chelsea by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1964	15 25%	21 36%	17 41%	- -	- -	1 20%
1968	14 23%	22 40%	11 38%	- -	0 0%	4 40%
1971	16 27%	19 33%	12 41%	- -	2 20%	3 33%
1974	15 25%	22 36%	21 35%	- -	0 0%	33 53%
1978	12 22%	13 24%	23 55%	- -	0 0%	8 29%
1982	17 31%	20 37%	15 28%	- -	- -	25 51%
1986	12 22%	20 37%	16 30%	2 40%	0 0%	3 75%
1990	15 28%	18 33%	15 32%	1 17%	0 0%	5 38%
1994	13 24%	24 44%	26 48%	3 75%	0 0%	2 40%
1998	13 24%	19 35%	28 52%	- -	0 0%	- -
2002	14 26%	18 33%	22 42%	2 100%	- -	- -
2006	17 31%	20 38%	21 44%	2 22%	- -	1 50%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

The Labour party have a high proportion of women candidates for each election, always higher than Conservatives. Although Liberal Democrats also have a high proportion of women they do not always exceed recruitment by Labour. Throughout this period the Conservative party has controlled the council. There are Labour councillors but they constitute less than a third of the council. As Table 4.7 shows that until 1986 the Labour party had a lower percentage of women councillors than the Conservatives. The proportion of Labour women elected was much lower than the proportion of women selected. However since 1990 Labour has fewer councillors than the Conservatives but a higher proportion of Labour women candidates are elected.

Table 4.7 Women Councillors in Kensington and Chelsea by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1964	14 30%	2 14%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1968	14 25%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1971	8 21%	4 19%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1974	12 27%	3 19%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1978	11 28%	2 15%	- -	- -	- -	0 0%
1982	12 31%	3 20%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1986	9 23%	4 27%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1990	11 28%	6 40%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1994	9 23%	7 47%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1998	10 26%	4 27%	- -	- -	- -	- -
2002	11 26%	4 33%	- -	- -	- -	- -
2006	14 31%	5 56%	- -	- -	- -	- -

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

4.5.4 London boroughs with low proportions of women candidates

Hounslow.

Hounslow is an outer London borough formed in 1964 from three former urban district councils, Brentford and Chiswick, Feltham and Heston and Isleworth. It is a suburban development ten miles south west of Central London. Hounslow developed along the route of the Great South West Road with large manufacturing companies providing employment including Firestone and Gillette. These have now been replaced by the pharmaceutical company, GlaxoSmithKline and British Sky Broadcasting.

Hounslow had one of the lowest proportions of women standing in 1964 and that proportion has always remained below the London average and was

the lowest in the early 1970s. The gradual increase since the mid-eighties corresponds to the average increase for women in London but Hounslow started at approximately five percentage points below average and that difference continues forty years later. As Table 4.8 shows the three main parties had candidates for each election year, the Labour party always contests all sixty seats, as do the Conservatives most years. The Conservative party had fewer candidates recently, 55 standing in 2002 and 47 in 2006. Candidate numbers fluctuate for the Liberal Democrats; they contest from a third to two thirds of seats.

In 1964 the Labour party had the largest proportion of women candidates, 18% is slightly higher than the national average for that year but below London's average. The proportion of women standing for Labour varied slightly during the next thirty years but not until 1998 did it exceed 20%. The proportion of women standing for the Conservative party increased much earlier; in 1978 it was 30% but then dropped until 1994. In stark contrast with Camden and Kensington this borough has a moderate proportion of women standing for the Liberal Democrats. It is not until 1998 that the Liberal Democrat party has a greater proportion of women than either the Labour or Conservative party. The Green party have women candidates for only two years and even women standing as candidates for minor parties and Independents are less apparent in this borough so whilst the presence of these women assist the gradual increase for the borough they do not make a significant difference to the overall proportion.

Table 4.8 Women Candidates in Hounslow by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1964	9 15%	11 18%	4 9%	- -	- -	0 0%
1968	9 15%	10 17%	4 25%	- -	- -	0 0%
1971	10 18%	6 10%	1 10%	- -	- -	4 57%
1974	15 26%	9 15%	3 14%	- -	- -	2 17%
1978	18 30%	11 18%	6 29%	- -	- -	3 12%
1982	15 25%	12 20%	13 22%	- -	1 33%	2 25%
1986	16 27%	11 18%	11 19%	- -	1 100%	0 0%
1990	16 27%	10 17%	7 23%	6 46%	0 0%	0 0%
1994	21 35%	12 20%	10 26%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
1998	18 30%	14 23%	16 36%	0 0%	3 18%	- -
2002	16 29%	15 25%	13 33%	1 17%	2 50%	5 20%
2006	15 32%	18 30%	10 33%	0 0%	2 11%	5 50%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Until 1986 Councillors in Hounslow were either Labour or Conservative. Three Liberal Democrats were then elected in 1986 and since there have been a maximum of five Liberal Democrat councillors and small numbers from minor parties. The Labour party has the largest numbers of councillors for every election except 1968, that year was unusual when Labour win only seven seats and Conservatives the remaining fifty-three. This result contrasts sharply with 1964 when Labour win forty-eight seats and the Conservatives twelve, the election of 1971 restored this party electoral balance with forty-seven seats for labour and thirteen for Conservatives. Since 1971 the Conservative party always have fewer councillors than Labour but greater proportions of their councillors are women. As Table 4.9 shows there is only one election when the proportion of Labour women elected exceeds 20%.

Table 4.9 Women Councillors in Hounslow by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1964	0 0%	6 13%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1968	8 15%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1971	2 15%	3 6%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1974	6 25%	2 6%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1978	5 21%	4 11%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1982	6 22%	3 9%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1986	4 24%	6 15%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1990	6 40%	5 11%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1994	3 50%	9 18%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1998	5 45%	10 23%	0 0%	- -	0 0%	- -
2002	6 40%	6 17%	1 20%	- -	- -	1 25%
2006	10 43%	4 17%	1 20%	- -	0 0%	3 50%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Tower Hamlets.

Tower Hamlets is in London's East End. This borough incorporated Bethnal Green, Stepney and Poplar. It now includes most of the redeveloped Docklands at West India Docks and Canary Wharf on the Isle of Dogs. Although Canary Wharf is an affluent district of financial businesses, this borough is the most deprived in the UK. It has the highest national rate of unemployment and the highest percentage of young people, 52% are under 30 years of age.

In Tower Hamlets the proportion of women candidates was very close to the average for London in 1964. That percentage dipped sharply in 1968 but recovered and rose rapidly during the 1970s. Despite minor fluctuations that percentage has steadily fallen and is currently the lowest in London, approximately ten percentage points below average. The Conservative and Liberal Democratic parties begin this period with higher than average proportions of women standing. The upward trend of the 1970s is due to their

candidates plus Independent and minor party candidates. The Labour party recruit a smaller proportion of women than the Conservative party most years, sometimes the difference is substantial in 1964 and 1974, (Table 4.10), the proportion is four times higher for Conservative women. The Labour party recruits relatively low numbers of women throughout this period and the gap between the parties only narrows from 1986 because the proportion of women Conservative candidates reduces to bring them closer to Labour.

Table 4.10 Women Candidates in Tower Hamlets by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1964	10 50%	7 12%	5 29%	- -	0 0%	1 7%
1968	0 0%	11 18%	3 50%	- -	0 0%	1 8%
1971	7 32%	11 18%	2 67%	- -	0 0%	2 20%
1974	6 86%	10 17%	3 30%	- -	2 100%	3 38%
1978	12 44%	9 18%	4 40%	- -	0 0%	13 22%
1982	9 41%	11 22%	5 15%	- -	1 13%	3 21%
1986	9 28%	12 24%	10 20%	- -	1 13%	0 0%
1990	8 27%	10 20%	13 32%	1 10%	0 0%	0 0%
1994	9 27%	13 26%	14 30%	0 0%	0 0%	5 33%
1998	8 25%	9 18%	11 28%	- -	0 0%	4 31%
2002	8 16%	8 16%	14 28%	12 43%	0 0%	2 20%
2006	11 22%	12 24%	10 20%	8 44%	2 13%	17 33%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

As Table 4.11 shows the Conservative party win no seats until 2006 and for the first ten years the Liberal Democrats have no councillors. The Labour party have an overwhelming majority of seats in this council; there are two Independent councillors in 1964 and three from minor parties in 1964 and 1968. Otherwise they are all Labour councillors until 1978 when the Liberal Democrats win seven seats. From 1978 until 2006 the Liberal Democrats have a consistently higher proportion of women councillors than the Labour party. The

proportions of women elected for Labour is very close to the proportions selected.

Table 4.11 Women Councillors in Tower Hamlets by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1964	- -	6 11%	- -	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1968	- -	11 19%	- -	- -	- -	0 0%
1971	- -	11 18%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1974	- -	10 17%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1978	- -	7 16%	3 43%	- -	- -	- -
1982	- -	5 16%	4 22%	- -	0 0%	- -
1986	- -	4 17%	8 31%	- -	- -	- -
1990	- -	4 20%	9 30%	- -	- -	- -
1994	- -	12 28%	4 57%	- -	- -	- -
1998	- -	7 17%	3 33%	- -	- -	- -
2002	- -	4 11%	4 25%	- -	- -	- -
2006	2 29%	6 23%	2 33%	- -	- -	3 25%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

4.5.5 London Boroughs: Conclusions

Based on the election results from these four boroughs is it possible to see any overall pattern of recruitment by the parties that is associated with election success? We can compare the proportion of women standing for the party that wins most seats in the borough with the women candidates for the other two main parties. Does each party recruit more women to stand in the boroughs where they are less successful?

The Conservative party is most successful in Kensington elections and the proportion of women standing for the party in this borough is always more than 20%. However the less successful parties have a greater proportion of women candidates sometimes twice the percentage of Conservative women.

This pattern is repeated in the boroughs of Hounslow and Tower Hamlets, where the Labour party wins most seats. However these two boroughs have a relatively low percentage of women candidates overall and the difference between the parties is much closer. Since 1971 the Conservative party has a greater proportion of women candidates than the Labour party. In 1978 the Liberal Democrats doubled their proportion of women standing and since then have exceeded Labour in every election in Hounslow and do the same in Tower Hamlets since 1990.

However, the borough of Camden does not display the pattern described above for all parties, the Labour party win most seats and has a high proportion of women candidates this ranges from 30% to 46% since 1982. Over this period the Conservative party is second in popularity and usually has a smaller proportion of women candidates than Labour. Since 1990 the Liberal Democrats have the highest proportion of women standing and only win a few seats until 2006, at which election they are the largest party on the council.

The pattern of recruitment in three boroughs, Kensington and Chelsea, Hounslow and Tower Hamlets does confirm that the most successful party has the lowest proportion of women candidates. There seems to be an association between the percentage of women candidates for a party and election success. What we cannot tell from this examination of candidates and party competition is whether there were opportunities for the winning party to select new candidates or if the seats were occupied by long-standing incumbents.

A comparison of the demographics of these four boroughs reveals major differences between Camden and Kensington with their high participation rate of women standing for election and Hounslow and Tower Hamlets. Previous

studies associate women's participation in politics with their social background and structural resources. Higher educational qualifications, income and socio-economic status are resources linked with political activism, (Lovenduski et al. 2004)

We know that councillors are disproportionately drawn from well-educated and professional or managerial occupations. The European Social Survey 2002 found that in the UK differences in political participation between men and women was significant amongst those who had no qualifications. There was no difference in participation between men and women who had degrees or equivalent level of education, (ESS 2002). The census returns for 2001 show that boroughs of Camden and Kensington and Chelsea have an unusually high percentage of residents with university education. In the national ranking Kensington is second and Camden is fifth highest local authority. The national average for having degree qualification is 19.8% of the population. This is more than doubled in Camden at 47% and in Kensington it is 51.5%. Both Hounslow and Tower Hamlets have a lower percentage of graduates, in Hounslow, 28.4% and Tower Hamlets, 29.6%. This difference in education could be a contributory factor in the differing rates of women's participation.

Within these four boroughs there are also major differences in the ethnicity of the residents. Almost three quarters of residents in Camden are "white" and the percentage for Kensington is higher at 79%. The larger minority ethnic groups in Camden are Bangladeshi, 6.4% and Black African, 6%, and in Kensington it is Black African 3.8% and Black Caribbean 2.6%. Hounslow has 65% white residents and 17.3% Indian and 4.3 % Pakistani. Tower Hamlets has 51.4% white and 33.4% Bangladeshi. Both boroughs with a low proportion of

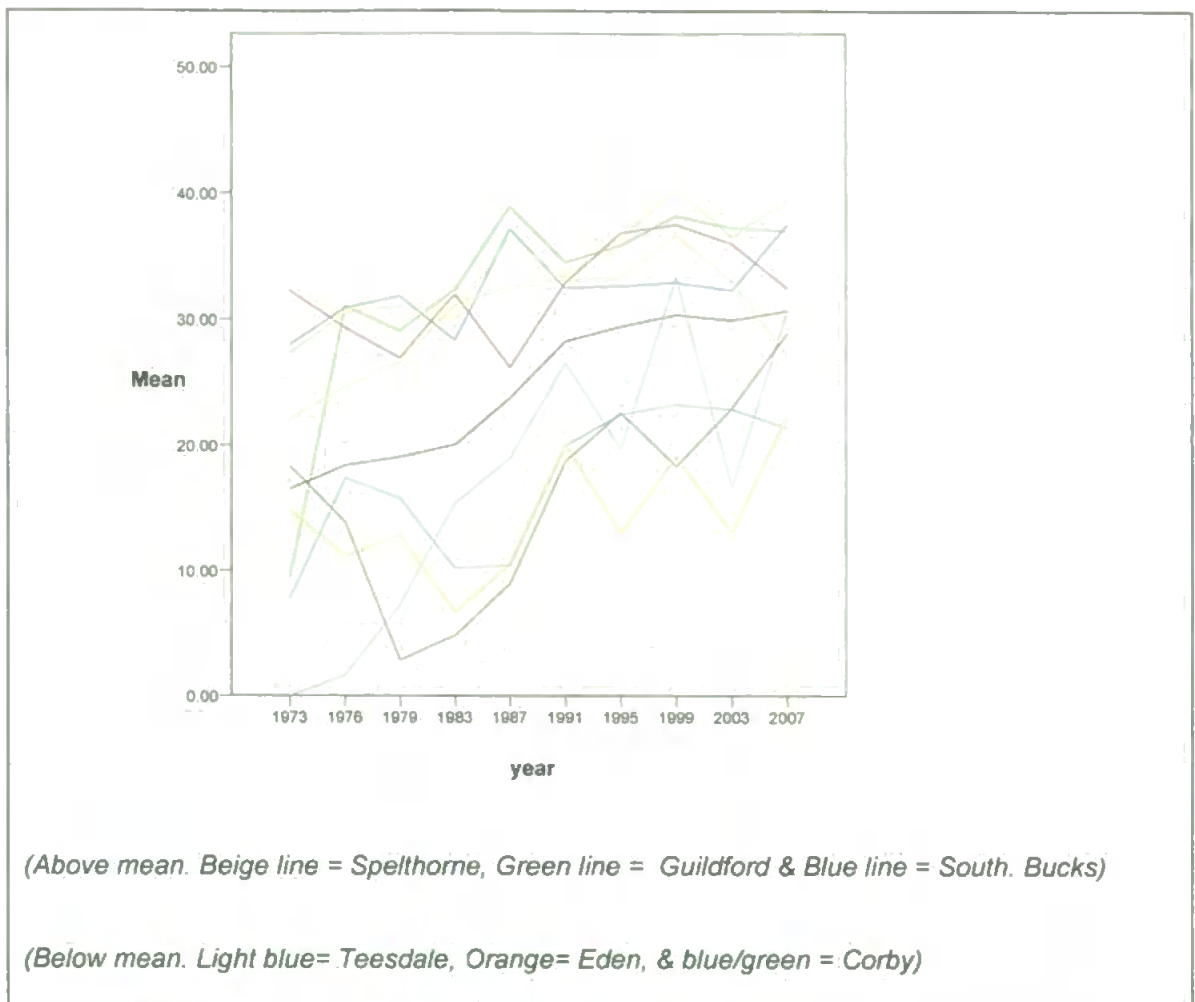
women standing have a relatively high percentage of Southern Asian residents whose traditional values do not encourage women to participate in public, particularly Muslim values of Bangladesh and Pakistan. Two of the councillors interviewed speak of the barriers that affect Asian women and public life, and contribute towards their lack of involvement in political life, (see section 7.5.4).

4.6 Shire Districts

4.6.1 Introduction

The 149 shire district councils selected for analysis hold all-council elections every four years. These non metropolitan district councils were created by the Local Government Act 1972. In Figure 4.2, the dotted black line shows the mean number of women candidates across the shire districts. There are five district councils that are above the mean for most of this time and also five districts that are mostly below the mean number of women standing.

As Figure 4.2 shows that the average proportion of women candidates across district councils has risen gradually from 16% in 1973 and almost doubled to 30% in 2007. This increase has three distinct phases, a gradual increase to 20% by 1983, and then the proportion of women standing rose steeply towards 30% by 1991. After 1991 there was a slight decrease but by 2007 the percentage has risen to 30%.

Figure 4.2. Women Candidates in District Council Elections

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

I begin by describing the presence of women candidates across the shire districts and comparing the similarities and differences between the proportions of women who stand for each party. Next is a comparison of women's electoral success, the popularity of each party and if there seem to be any association between party popularity and women councillors.

Table 4.12 shows that the proportion of women candidates for the Conservative and Labour parties is always closely matched but the Liberal Democrats have a greater proportion than either main party at all elections. Although the numbers are small, since 1991 the Green party have the highest

proportion of women at around 40%. The proportion of women candidates standing for minor parties is lower than for the main parties. There are a higher number of Independent candidates compared with the main parties in these districts than in London or the metropolitan authorities.

Table 4.12 Women Candidates in the Shire Districts by Political Party

Year	n	+	%	n	+	%	n	+	%	n	+	%	n	+	%	n	+	%
	Female Conservative			Female Labour			Female Lib Dems			Female Green			Female Independent			Female Other		
1973	823		19%	860		17%	309		23%	-		-	700		13%	66		16%
1976	1076		20%	861		19%	467		24%	1		33%	580		16%	106		16%
1979	1212		20%	826		19%	377		25%	3		19%	460		15%	90		17%
1983	1144		21%	959		20%	849		23%	24		27%	423		16%	73		21%
1987	1342		23%	1224		23%	1466		29%	43		26%	400		17%	60		19%
1991	1657		28%	1524		29%	1330		34%	219		39%	493		21%	105		29%
1995	1449		30%	1678		31%	1452		33%	118		39%	502		22%	68		23%
1999	1400		30%	1428		31%	1335		36%	86		42%	385		23%	47		29%
2003	1522		29%	1113		31%	1295		36%	154		43%	333		23%	119		22%
2007	1712		30%	981		31%	1338		35%	178		39%	325		24%	258		25%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

The proportions of women elected for the main parties are lower than the proportions selected. The differences are small for the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, often 2% and slightly larger for Labour women at 5%. The Green party shows the greatest difference in proportion of women selected and elected but they have a small number of councillors. The large numbers of Independent candidates who win council seats distinguishes some of the non-partisan shire districts from London or metropolitan boroughs. Table 4.13 shows that this difference does diminish over the years but remains a feature of these councils. When women stand as Independents or minor party candidates the proportions elected are equal to or greater than their candidate proportions.

Table 4.13 Women Councillors in the Shire Districts by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	475 18%	293 13%	104 21%	- -	432 15%	30 18%
1976	799 20%	213 15%	73 21%	0 0%	392 17%	37 15%
1979	812 20%	228 14%	114 24%	0 0%	331 17%	44 21%
1983	842 21%	243 15%	172 24%	0 0%	285 17%	33 22%
1987	942 24%	280 18%	357 28%	0 0%	253 19%	32 22%
1991	864 27%	452 23%	534 33%	2 20%	284 22%	45 27%
1995	455 28%	756 26%	617 33%	2 17%	248 23%	29 30%
1999	667 27%	488 26%	482 33%	3 23%	216 24%	20 34%
2003	824 27%	343 27%	490 33%	5 26%	174 23%	42 27%
2007	1076 29%	235 29%	448 33%	9 31%	152 25%	52 23%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Having looked at women candidates and councillors across the shire districts, six were selected for closer examination. The districts selected for more detailed comparison are Spelthorne, Guildford and South Bucks with high proportions of women standing and Teesdale, Eden and Corby with low proportions of women candidates. The analysis of women's participation in each district is prefaced by a paragraph describing the borough's location in England and noting the main socio-economic indicators.

4.6.2 Shire districts with high proportions of women candidates

Spelthorne.

Spelthorne is in Surrey in the South East of England, the main towns are Ashford, Laleham, Shepperton, Staines and Sunbury. The most significant employment in the area is at Heathrow Airport which is just north of the borough, although many residents commute to London. It is a mixture of leafy suburbs and suburban housing, the borough has large reservoirs and areas of special scientific interest.

The proportion of women standing in Spelthorne has always been above average for district councils and is currently the highest. In 1973 the proportion was above 20% and that has risen towards 40%. The pattern of increase mirrors the average proportion for district councils until 1991 subsequently this borough shows fluctuations in the proportion of women candidates rising and falling steeply. For most of these elections the Labour and Conservative parties contest all seats but since 2003 the Labour party have candidates for approximately half of the seats. Until 2003 the proportion of women standing for the Labour party is greater than those who stand for the Conservative party. Throughout this period the Liberal Democrats and the Labour party field a relatively high proportion of women candidates. (Table 4.14)

In contrast with the London boroughs that have higher than average proportion of women standing, women candidates from minor parties do not enhance the proportion of women candidates. The Green party first contest these elections in 2007. Women candidates do not stand for other small parties in this district and only two women Independent candidates stand for one election in 1976.

Table 4.14 Women Candidates in Spelthorne by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	6 12%	17 33%	5 24%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1976	8 15%	16 31%	8 32%	- -	2 25%	0 0%
1979	8 20%	14 35%	3 25%	- -	0 0%	- -
1983	8 20%	15 38%	10 40%	- -	- -	0 0%
1987	8 20%	14 35%	17 44%	- -	0 0%	- -
1991	10 25%	15 38%	14 38%	- -	- -	- -
1995	11 28%	16 41%	16 42%	- -	0 0%	- -
1999	14 35%	15 44%	17 43%	- -	- -	- -
2003	14 36%	5 26%	15 44%	- -	- -	0 0%
2007	13 33%	7 30%	17 49%	1 100%	- -	1 100%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

As Table 4.15 shows Spelthorne councillors were either Conservative or Labour until 1991. At every election the Conservative party wins many more seats than Labour, often more than three-quarters of the seats are won by Conservative candidates and from 1979 until 1991 there are only two or four Labour councillors. The proportions of women elected for the Conservatives are close to the proportions selected, just one or two percentage points difference. The proportions of Labour women candidates are high but the party wins few seats. The proportions of women elected for Labour vary greatly but in some years a greater proportion of Labour councillors are women compared with the Conservatives. Although the Liberal Democrats have a consistently high proportion of women candidates, the party do not win any seats until 1991.

Table 4.15 Women Councillors in Spelthorne by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	4 10%	3 23%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1976	7 16%	2 29%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1979	6 16%	1 50%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1983	6 17%	1 25%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1987	7 18%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1991	8 24%	0 0%	1 33%	- -	- -	- -
1995	3 14%	8 50%	1 33%	- -	- -	- -
1999	7 26%	4 44%	2 50%	- -	- -	- -
2003	13 37%	- -	1 25%	- -	- -	- -
2007	10 32%	- -	3 38%	- -	- -	- -

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Guildford

Guildford is the county town of Surrey and a commercial centre. The principal employers are Satellite technology companies and bus and fire engine manufacturers. The Army has barracks nearby and there is a military vehicle company in the area. It is also an affluent area and popular with London commuters.

The proportion of women standing in the district of Guildford in 1973 was below 10% but this rose sharply to be above 30% by the next election. This increase placed the district above average in 1976, a position that has been sustained. Since 1976 Guildford has one of the highest proportions of women standing in district elections. Each of the main parties begin this period with a low percentage of women candidates but this rises rapidly by 1976 and the overall proportion is boosted by women Independent candidates. As Table 4.16 shows the minor parties do not contest these elections until 1991 and the Green party has its first candidates in 1995. For most elections until 1991 the Labour

party has the greatest proportion of women candidates, the Liberal Democrats increase the proportion of women to above 40% from 1995 but are only one or two percentage points ahead of Labour. The Conservative party usually has the lowest proportion of women and sometimes a 10% difference compared with women candidates for the Labour party.

Table 4.16 Women Candidates in Guildford by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	4 10%	2 6%	3 14%	- -	1 11%	- -
1976	12 27%	10 34%	8 35%	- -	2 33%	- -
1979	12 28%	14 38%	5 23%	- -	1 13%	- -
1983	13 30%	16 36%	12 29%	- -	2 50%	- -
1987	16 36%	18 42%	17 40%	- -	0 0%	- -
1991	14 32%	15 38%	15 35%	- -	0 0%	4 40%
1995	13 31%	15 38%	18 41%	1 50%	0 0%	- -
1999	14 32%	19 42%	19 43%	- -	0 0%	- -
2003	16 34%	20 43%	20 43%	1 33%	0 0%	0 0%
2007	15 31%	14 41%	20 43%	0 0%	1 25%	0 0%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Before 1991 The Conservative party wins at least two-thirds of the seats in Guildford but relatively few women councillors. Table 4.17 shows that during this time the Labour party win only six seats at each election but they have a larger proportion of women councillors. From 1991 until 2007 the Liberal Democrat party wins almost half of the seats and they increase the proportion of women councillor, exceeding the Labour party in the last two elections. The proportions of women elected for the main parties in this borough are high; frequently exceeding the proportions selected by around 12 - 15%.

Table 4.17 Women Councillors in Guildford by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	4 14%	1 17%	2 40%	- -	1 50%	- -
1976	10 29%	2 33%	0 0%	- -	1 50%	- -
1979	11 32%	2 33%	1 33%	- -	1 50%	- -
1983	9 29%	2 33%	1 14%	- -	1 100%	- -
1987	12 40%	3 60%	4 40%	- -	-	- -
1991	9 47%	3 50%	9 47%	- -	0 0%	- -
1995	6 46%	3 50%	10 43%	- -	0 0%	- -
1999	5 29%	3 50%	10 50%	- -	0 0%	- -
2003	8 31%	1 50%	10 53%	- -	0 0%	- -
2007	8 31%	- -	12 55%	- -	- -	- -

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

South Bucks

South Bucks is one of the four district councils in the county of Buckinghamshire in South East England. It is approximately 25 miles North West of London and part of the London commuter belt. It is within the Chiltern Hills area of outstanding natural beauty. It is a prosperous area with high priced housing.

South Bucks has always had above average percentage of women standing. The main parties have contested every election but not every seat the Conservative party always fields more candidates than Labour or Liberal Democrats. The Labour party has candidates for half of the seats in 1995, and Liberal Democrats half in 1995 & 1999 but typically they contest a third or fewer. As Table 4.18 shows there are a large proportion of women standing as Independent candidates and for minor parties. The Liberal Democrats have the largest proportion of women candidates amongst the main parties since 1987.

Table 4.18 Women Candidates in South Bucks by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	10 29%	2 20%	3 21%	- -	3 30%	3 43%
1976	12 31%	3 27%	1 14%	- -	0 0%	5 56%
1979	11 28%	4 40%	2 50%	- -	0 0%	4 50%
1983	11 29%	1 17%	3 27%	0 0%	1 17%	5 45%
1987	11 29%	2 40%	9 56%	- -	0 0%	4 50%
1991	12 32%	1 13%	4 36%	- -	8 38%	- -
1995	11 30%	5 25%	8 38%	- -	8 40%	- -
1999	10 26%	1 9%	10 50%	- -	7 44%	- -
2003	11 29%	1 20%	7 50%	- -	2 25%	- -
2007	15 38%	1 25%	7 41%	- -	2 50%	2 25%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

The Conservative party win most seats every year and other councillors are usually Independent or from minor parties. The proportion of Conservative women elected is very close to the proportion selected. The proportions of Independent and minor party women elected are close to the proportions standing.

Over this period the Labour party and Liberal Democrats are not popular with voters. Labour have only two councillors in this borough, both men one in 1973 and one in 1979, (Table 4.19) and Liberal Democrats have at most four councillors at any time. Although Labour and Liberal Democrats select a high number of women they are not elected.

Table 4.19 Women Councillors in South Bucks by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	9 33%	0 0%	0 0%	- -	1 20%	3 50%
1976	11 32%	- -	- -	- -	0 0%	3 50%
1979	8 28%	0 0%	1 100%	- -	0 0%	4 50%
1983	9 29%	- -	0 0%	- -	0 0%	3 43%
1987	10 33%	- -	1 25%	- -	0 0%	3 50%
1991	9 31%	- -	1 100%	- -	4 36%	- -
1995	5 26%	- -	2 50%	- -	8 47%	- -
1999	6 23%	- -	1 25%	- -	4 40%	- -
2003	11 33%	- -	0 0%	- -	1 17%	- -
2007	14 39%	- -	0 0%	- -	- -	0 0%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

4.6.3 Shire districts with low proportion of women candidates

Teesdale.

Teesdale is in County Durham in the North East of England. It has the lowest population of the seven district councils in Durham but covers the largest geographical area. It is a sparsely populated rural district with three-quarters of the population living in small rural communities and a quarter in the main town of Barnard Castle. Tourism is now the main industry.

The proportion of women candidates in Teesdale has been below the average for district council elections for much of this period. In 1973, 9% of the Independent candidates were women and there were no other women candidates. The Conservative party and Liberal Democrats contest very few seats in this district but as Table 4.20 shows the Labour party has more candidates but it is Independent candidates that dominate elections.

Table 4.20 Women Candidates in Teesdale by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	- -	0 0%	- -	- -	4 9%	- -
1976	- -	1 9%	- -	- -	7 20%	- -
1979	- -	2 29%	- -	- -	4 13%	- -
1983	0 0%	1 10%	0 0%	- -	4 11%	- -
1987	0 0%	2 22%	0 0%	- -	3 9%	- -
1991	0 0%	3 30%	0 0%	0 0%	7 21%	- -
1995	0 0%	4 29%	- -	- -	7 21%	- -
1999	1 100%	3 19%	- -	- -	6 23%	- -
2003	1 33%	2 18%	- -	- -	5 24%	- -
2007	2 40%	2 22%	- -	- -	1 14%	4 19%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Table 4.21 Women Councillors in Teesdale by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	- -	0 0%	- -	- -	2 7%	- -
1976	- -	1 25%	- -	- -	6 24%	- -
1979	- -	0 0%	- -	- -	4 15%	- -
1983	- -	0 0%	- -	- -	3 12%	- -
1987	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	- -	2 9%	- -
1991	0 0%	2 29%	0 0%	- -	4 19%	- -
1995	0 0%	4 36%	- -	- -	4 22%	- -
1999	1 100%	2 20%	- -	- -	4 20%	- -
2003	1 33%	1 11%	- -	- -	4 20%	- -
2007	2 50%	2 33%	- -	- -	1 17%	2 13%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

As Table 4.21 shows Teesdale council has few women councillors; most councillors are Independent. Amongst the main parties it is only the Labour party that has any success in this borough for the first ten years with between two and five councillors but only one woman wins a seat for Labour in 1976. It is not until 1987 that the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats win seats and then

it is three and one respectively. The proportions of Independent women elected are close to the proportions standing.

Eden.

Eden is in the North West of England and is one of the six district councils in Cumbria. It includes the four towns, Alston, Appleby, Kirkby Stephen and Penrith.

Eden is the second largest geographical district in England and most sparsely populated in England and Wales. Most of the population live in small villages, only Penrith is described as urban and even the largest town is officially classified as "urban sparse". Tourism is important in this area with many small businesses involved: a high proportion of people work part-time or self-employed in the tourist industry. Eden district council is one of the major employers in the district, with staff in tourism offices.

The scarcity of candidates for the main parties is the striking feature of the early elections in Eden. This borough has mostly Independents until 1999 but unlike Teesdale there are also a number of candidates for minor parties. Table 4.22 shows some relatively high percentages of women candidates for the Conservative and Labour parties, however the numbers are tiny e.g. 100% Conservative in 1979 equalled one candidate. The 50% for Labour, in 1979 and 1987 was just one woman candidate.

Table 4.22 Women Candidates in Eden by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	- -	- -	- -	- -	7 15%	1 17%
1976	- -	0 0%	- -	- -	4 12%	1 10%
1979	1 100%	1 50%	- -	- -	3 9%	1 10%
1983	- -	0 0%	0 0%	- -	3 10%	0 0%
1987	0 0%	1 50%	- -	0 0%	5 13%	0 0%
1991	0 0%	1 20%	2 50%	- -	6 19%	1 11%
1995	- -	1 25%	2 40%	- -	4 10%	0 0%
1999	3 38%	5 33%	1 17%	0 0%	3 9%	- -
2003	0 0%	1 33%	2 29%	- -	3 10%	- -
2007	6 33%	0 0%	- -	1 50%	2 9%	3 38%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Table 4.23 Women Councillors in Eden by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	- -	- -	- -	- -	5 16%	0 0%
1976	- -	- -	- -	- -	3 11%	1 10%
1979	- -	0 0%	- -	- -	2 7%	1 13%
1983	- -	- -	- -	- -	3 11%	0 0%
1987	0 0%	- -	- -	- -	4 14%	0 0%
1991	0 0%	- -	2 50%	- -	5 20%	1 13%
1995	- -	1 50%	2 50%	- -	3 11%	0 0%
1999	1 33%	0 0%	1 33%	- -	3 10%	- -
2003	0 0%	- -	2 50%	- -	3 11%	- -
2007	6 43%	- -	- -	- -	2 11%	2 40%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Table 4.23 shows that minor parties contest seats in this borough and do win seats, however most councillors are Independent. The proportions of women Independents elected is approximately the same as the proportion who stand. Since 1999 the main parties have contested more seats so the pattern is changing. Especially the Conservative party who increased their popularity and

won fourteen seats in 2007, the first year they have contested many seats. The proportions of women elected for the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats are close to the proportions selected since 1999.

Corby

Corby is an industrial town in the north of Northamptonshire, bordering on Leicestershire. It has a long history of iron and steel making. In 1950 Corby was designated as a "new town" and the population expanded, especially with migrant workers from Scotland. British Steel had phased out iron and steel-making by 1981 causing unemployment but during the 1990s the area attracted new industries. Corby was helped by the government Enterprise Zone scheme and national advertising campaigns to publicise the economic benefits of relocating to the town.

Corby is another district with low proportions of women standing but here the party competition is stronger than in Teesdale and Eden, particularly for the Conservative and Labour parties and there are only a few Independent candidates. The increase in women candidates in the 1980s is assisted by Liberal Democrats and candidates for minor parties. However as Table 4.24 shows during the 1990s it is the Conservative party that fields the highest proportion of women.

At every election except 1976 Labour wins most seats. The proportions of women elected are near to the proportions selected. Recently, in 2003 the Conservative party contested more seats with success and had nine councillors, one of whom is a woman and Liberal Democrats in 2007 have five councillors, one is a woman, (Table 4.25).

Table 4.24 Women Candidates in Corby by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1976	0 0%	1 4%	0 0%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1979	1 4%	3 11%	0 0%	- -	0 0%	- -
1983	3 15%	3 11%	1 33%	- -	- -	1 50%
1987	2 12%	5 19%	4 36%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1991	8 42%	4 15%	1 33%	- -	0 0%	- -
1995	3 27%	6 22%	0 0%	- -	- -	4 17%
1999	4 44%	9 32%	0 0%	- -	1 33%	- -
2003	2 11%	6 21%	2 20%	- -	0 0%	- -
2007	8 32%	9 33%	2 25%	0 0%	0 0%	- -

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Table 4.25 Women Councillors in Corby by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	0 0%	0 0%	- -	- -	0 0%	- -
1976	0 0%	0 0%	- -	- -	0 0%	- -
1979	0 0%	2 9%	- -	- -	0 0%	- -
1983	0 0%	2 8%	- -	- -	- -	- -
1987	0 0%	2 9%	- -	- -	0 0%	- -
1991	1 100%	3 13%	1 50%	- -	0 0%	- -
1995	0 0%	5 21%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1999	0 0%	9 33%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
2003	1 11%	5 28%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
2007	2 25%	5 31%	1 20%	- -	- -	- -

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

4.6.4 Shire Districts :Conclusions

A comparison of the demographics of these six districts reveals some differences between those with a high participation rate of women standing compared with those with lower proportions. As Table 4.26 shows the overwhelming majority of residents in these districts are “white” there are no

significant ethnic minority groups. The proportion of Guildford and South Bucks' residents with degree qualifications is high but this is not so in Spelthorne. Actually one of the districts, Eden, with low percentage of women standing has a higher percentage of graduates than Spelthorne and the proportion in Teesdale is less than one percentage point below Spelthorne.

Comparison of the census details concerning ethnicity and educational qualifications in these districts do not appear to contribute towards an understanding of the differences in women's levels of participation.

Table 4.26 Demographic profiles of residents of selected District Councils

District	% women candidates	% "White"	% Degree or equivalent	Pop. Density, per hectare
National average: England and Wales	30%	91.3	19.8	3.4
Spelthorne	High	94.3	18.7	20.1
Guildford	High	95.9	30.6	4.8
South Bucks	High	93.4	28.6	4.4
Teesdale	Low	99.2	17.9	0.3
Eden	Low	99.6	19.0	0.2
Corby	Low	98.3	8.5	6.6

Source: National Statistics: Census 2001: profiles

What seems to be more convincing is the difference in the density of population between Teesdale, Eden and the other four districts. Teesdale and Eden are sparsely populated rural authorities dominated by Independent candidates; the main political parties do not feature prominently in these district elections. Nationally the political parties recruit most of the candidates for local elections and it is unusual to have such a concentration of Independent candidates. The evidence from the survey research showed that women were more likely to stand for election when asked and that Independent candidates are more likely to be men, (see section 5.6). It may be the absence of local

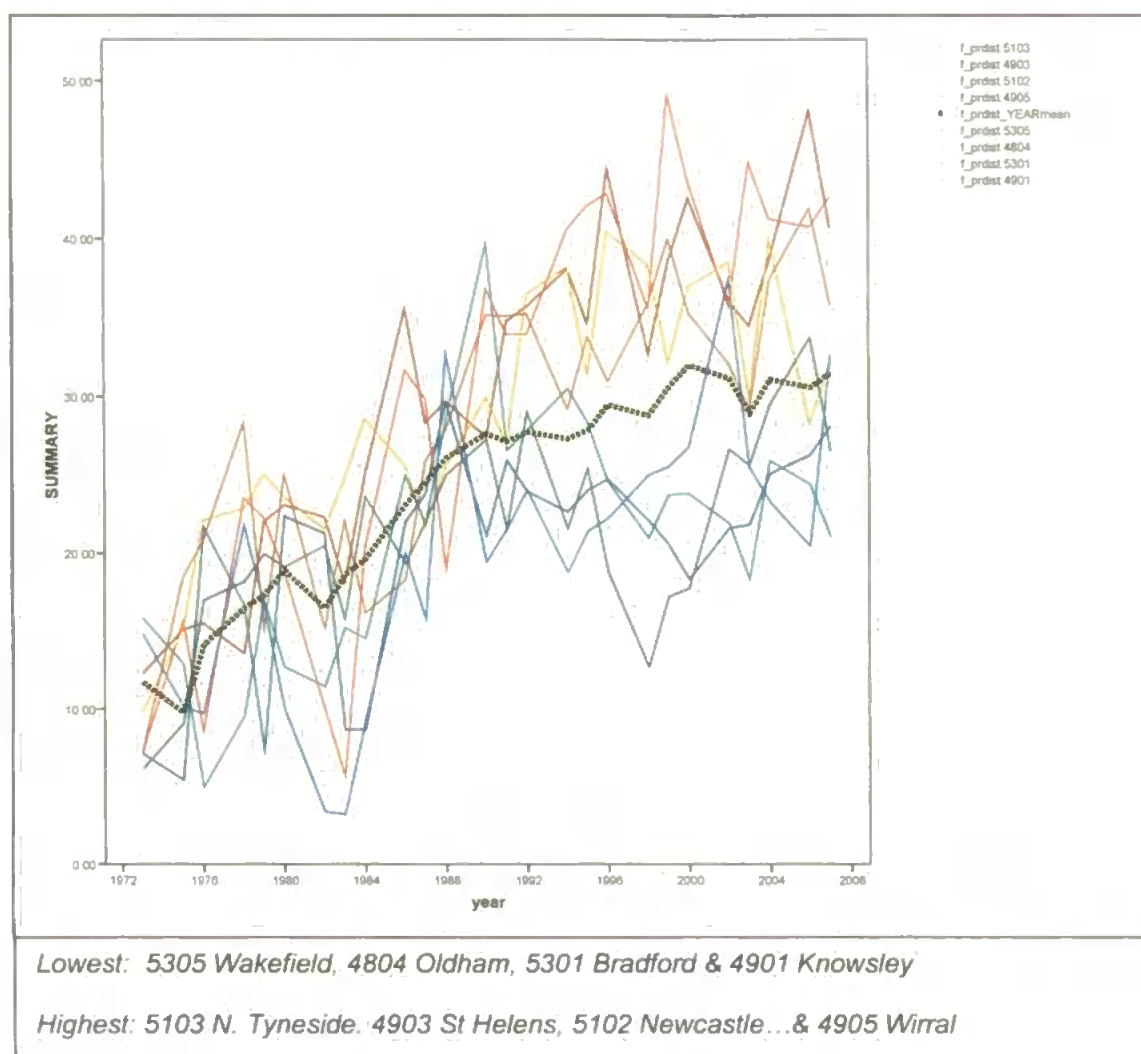
party networks and support in these districts that reduces women's rates of participation.

4.7 Metropolitan Boroughs

4.7.1 Introduction

The Local Government Act, 1972 created 36 metropolitan boroughs in urban areas of England outside London. This analysis of women candidates and councillors covers elections from 1973 until 2007. Elections for these boroughs are held in a four year cycle but unlike the London boroughs and all-out district councils, metropolitan authorities have more frequent elections. One-third of the council is elected in each of three successive years with no borough elections in the fourth year. The first election to establish the new metropolitan councils in 1973 was a whole-council election. The other whole council elections were in 1982, 1984 and 2004 following boundary changes.

Figure 4.3 The percentage of women candidates in Metropolitan Boroughs



Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

In Figure 4.3, the dotted black line shows the mean number of women candidates across all metropolitan boroughs. The red and orange lines show the four boroughs with the highest proportions of women candidates and the green and blue lines are the four lowest.

The average proportion of women candidates in the metropolitan boroughs has risen from 12% to 30%. Figure 4.3 shows that the average increase is uneven, interrupted by temporary declines and for some boroughs there is extreme variation. I begin by describing the presence of women candidates across all metropolitan boroughs and comparing the similarities and

differences between the proportions of women who stand for each party. Next is a comparison of women's electoral success, the popularity of each party and if there seem to be any association between party popularity and women councillors.

As Table 4.27 shows from 1973 until 2004 the Conservative party had a higher proportion of women candidates than the Labour party. Although the proportion of women candidates for the Liberal Democrats is lower than Conservatives initially the difference decreases during the 1980s. For most years from 1990 the Liberal Democrats have the highest percentage of women amongst the main parties. The Green party have their first women candidates in 1980. Although the numbers are relatively small they quickly recruit a higher proportion of women candidates than the main parties until 1994, thereafter the Green party's proportion of women candidates remains high but is matched or exceeded by the Liberal Democrats at some elections. These boroughs do not have high proportion of Independent women candidates. The proportions of women standing for the minor parties vary but in some years they exceed the proportion of Labour women.

Table 4.27 Women Candidates in the Metropolitan Boroughs by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	310 15%	238 10%	92 12%	- -	13 7%	26 7%
1975	109 14%	71 8%	34 7%	- -	3 5%	18 6%
1976	141 18%	103 12%	65 15%	0 0%	8 13%	38 12%
1978	163 20%	111 13%	61 18%	0 0%	6 12%	52 15%
1979	192 21%	116 12%	86 21%	0 0%	13 22%	46 17%
1980	249 21%	206 15%	143 22%	4 10%	8 14%	30 14%
1982	241 22%	213 16%	216 18%	7 23%	7 14%	16 10%
1983	175 23%	125 15%	157 20%	4 15%	4 10%	14 14%
1984	168 22%	141 17%	150 21%	6 35%	3 8%	9 12%
1986	203 27%	160 19%	185 25%	23 31%	10 16%	10 14%
1987	229 29%	172 20%	215 27%	39 36%	4 8%	6 12%
1988	236 29%	180 21%	180 30%	56 38%	5 9%	44 28%
1990	220 29%	192 22%	179 34%	127 39%	6 10%	22 25%
1991	229 30%	176 21%	201 34%	91 36%	17 20%	21 30%
1992	226 29%	196 23%	212 31%	81 33%	22 22%	18 26%
1994	234 31%	194 23%	199 31%	45 31%	16 16%	32 33%
1995	220 30%	204 24%	214 33%	43 31%	12 12%	42 35%
1996	214 29%	231 28%	207 32%	39 30%	22 19%	44 38%
1998	228 30%	220 26%	216 32%	56 40%	25 18%	46 29%
1999	234 30%	222 27%	255 35%	55 34%	34 21%	41 32%
2000	263 32%	245 28%	274 36%	59 34%	29 24%	45 26%
2002	237 31%	236 28%	254 36%	72 35%	28 24%	73 28%
2003	237 30%	210 25%	235 33%	74 35%	14 16%	86 24%
2004	643 32%	733 31%	590 33%	126 38%	49 19%	133 23%
2006	235 30%	291 35%	200 28%	113 39%	23 18%	107 23%
2007	252 32%	265 32%	205 30%	144 43%	29 22%	168 25%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Across all metropolitan boroughs the Labour party is the most successful at elections, (Table 4.28). The proportions of women elected are often slightly lower than the proportions selected for Labour. In 1975 and 1976 the Conservative party had two consecutive elections when they had more winners but since then they have been second to Labour and since 1994 usually in third place winning fewer seats than the Liberal Democrats. Whilst the Labour party

wins more seats they have a lower proportion of women councillors than either the Conservative or Liberal Democrat parties between 1980 and 2000. Although the Green party has high proportions of women candidates, the party has very few councillors in the Metropolitan boroughs. These councils have a small number of minor party or Independent councillors.

Table 4.28 Women Councillors in the Metropolitan Boroughs by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	108 15%	153 10%	15 8%	- -	4 14%	4 10%
1975	68 15%	30 9%	4 8%	- -	1 20%	3 9%
1976	70 17%	46 12%	2 5%	- -	1 11%	3 14%
1978	70 20%	54 12%	5 14%	- -	2 22%	4 25%
1979	64 20%	58 10%	3 7%	- -	3 50%	9 28%
1980	65 19%	117 13%	19 21%	- -	1 9%	2 14%
1982	87 21%	120 16%	38 29%	- -	3 33%	1 6%
1983	61 26%	72 13%	19 30%	- -	0 0%	3 43%
1984	40 21%	97 17%	20 26%	- -	1 20%	0 0%
1986	33 23%	109 18%	32 32%	- -	1 33%	1 25%
1987	59 25%	91 17%	24 23%	- -	1 33%	1 33%
1988	38 21%	111 18%	19 28%	- -	1 25%	2 50%
1990	29 25%	143 21%	21 32%	- -	0 0%	1 50%
1991	52 28%	105 20%	37 34%	- -	3 23%	2 33%
1992	71 26%	102 23%	32 33%	- -	7 50%	4 67%
1994	23 30%	136 21%	40 31%	- -	1 25%	0 0%
1995	11 22%	158 23%	42 42%	- -	1 33%	2 29%
1996	21 29%	167 27%	37 29%	0 0%	2 22%	1 25%
1998	25 23%	145 25%	49 32%	0 0%	2 29%	2 33%
1999	31 27%	133 25%	53 31%	0 0%	3 33%	1 20%
2000	60 30%	117 26%	60 30%	1 33%	4 44%	3 33%
2002	29 22%	150 28%	60 39%	2 50%	2 20%	3 30%
2003	52 33%	113 25%	60 31%	1 25%	2 25%	3 23%
2004	150 27%	366 31%	183 31%	7 58%	13 22%	11 22%
2006	50 26%	144 36%	50 26%	1 25%	2 13%	3 10%
2007	49 26%	133 33%	67 33%	3 50%	5 38%	6 33%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Having looked at women candidates and councillors across the metropolitan boroughs, four were selected for closer examination. North

Tyneside and Wirral were chosen because they currently have high proportions of women standing while Oldham and Knowsley have low proportions. The analysis of women's participation in each borough is prefaced by a paragraph describing the borough's location in England and noting the main socio-economic indicators.

4.7.2 Metropolitan Boroughs with High Proportion of Women Candidates

North Tyneside.

North Tyneside is in the North East of England and was a heavy industry area of coal mines and shipbuilding. The end of shipbuilding at the Swan Hunter yard at Wallsend and the closure of coal mines have resulted in areas of relatively high unemployment and social deprivation. However, the borough does include the affluent suburbs of Newcastle and more recently the industrial estates and retail parks along the route of the A19 replaced the traditional industries.

Table 4.29 shows the proportion of women standing in North Tyneside during this period. Amongst the main parties the Liberal Democrats are the first to increase the percentage of women above 30% but this is not sustained annually. In the early period both the Labour and Conservative parties have annual fluctuations in the proportion of women candidates, possibly a consequence of electing one third of the council seats. In 1994 the Conservative party have 38% women and thereafter maintain a consistently high proportion of women, sometimes twice the percentage of Labour and Liberal Democrats who continue to fluctuate. In some years the proportion of women candidates is greatly enhanced by the Green party and Independent

women whose presence probably contributes to the relatively high ranking for North Tyneside compared with other metropolitan boroughs.

Table 4.29 Women Candidates in North Tyneside by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	5 11%	9 12%	4 17%	- -	1 8%	0 0%
1975	3 19%	3 11%	1 13%	- -	1 50%	- -
1976	2 11%	6 23%	1 9%	- -	0 0%	- -
1978	2 10%	3 12%	2 33%	- -	1 33%	0 0%
1979	4 15%	5 19%	3 50%	- -	1 100%	- -
1980	6 29%	5 19%	0 0%	1 100%	0 0%	- -
1982	9 21%	14 23%	11 21%	- -	1 100%	- -
1983	5 25%	3 15%	3 16%	- -	0 0%	- -
1984	5 25%	5 25%	5 25%	- -	- -	- -
1986	3 21%	9 45%	8 47%	- -	1 13%	- -
1987	6 32%	7 35%	4 20%	- -	- -	0 0%
1988	6 30%	5 25%	5 31%	0 0%	- -	3 43%
1990	2 13%	2 10%	8 53%	4 57%	- -	1 25%
1991	6 30%	4 20%	10 50%	3 38%	1 100%	- -
1992	5 25%	7 35%	10 50%	3 30%	- -	- -
1994	8 38%	7 33%	4 33%	4 67%	1 50%	0 0%
1995	7 47%	6 30%	3 30%	- -	2 33%	0 0%
1996	7 44%	11 52%	5 42%	0 0%	1 50%	0 0%
1998	9 50%	5 25%	2 18%	- -	1 50%	0 0%
1999	10 59%	5 24%	6 33%	- -	1 100%	- -
2000	9 45%	9 43%	4 33%	- -	1 100%	- -
2002	8 40%	6 30%	8 40%	- -	0 0%	- -
2003	10 50%	4 20%	6 35%	- -	0 0%	- -
2004	22 38%	26 43%	11 41%	- -	0 0%	1 20%
2006	7 44%	10 50%	6 55%	- -	1 33%	1 50%
2007	9 50%	10 50%	4 33%	0 0%	0 0%	1 14%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Until 2006 the Labour party wins more seats than the Conservatives, throughout this period women candidates are successful for both parties in this borough. Table 4.30 shows many years when the proportion of women elected for the main parties is close to or exceeds the proportion of women candidates for each party. This is particularly true for the Liberal Democrat councillors; the party only wins a few seats but has a high proportion of women councillors.

Although the Conservative party wins fewer seats than Labour, Conservative women usually comprise a larger proportion of the party's successful candidates. As Table 4.30 shows the number of Conservative women elected equals Labour women in 1980, 1982 and 1983 but there are approximately ten percent more Conservative women councillors. In subsequent years this gap widens, in 1991 and 1999 the proportion of Conservative women councillors is more than double the proportion of Labour women.

Table 4.30 Women Councillors in North Tyneside by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	2 11%	7 15%	2 29%	- -	1 20%	- -
1975	2 17%	2 14%	- -	- -	1 100%	- -
1976	1 9%	3 21%	- -	- -	0 0%	- -
1978	2 18%	2 13%	- -	- -	1 100%	- -
1979	1 10%	2 13%	- -	- -	1 100%	- -
1980	3 30%	3 20%	- -	- -	0 0%	- -
1982	5 25%	5 16%	2 29%	- -	1 100%	- -
1983	2 29%	2 17%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1984	1 17%	3 25%	2 100%	- -	- -	- -
1986	1 20%	3 30%	3 75%	- -	1 100%	- -
1987	2 40%	4 33%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1988	1 17%	4 33%	1 100%	- -	- -	1 100%
1990	1 25%	2 14%	2 50%	- -	- -	- -
1991	3 60%	3 25%	1 33%	- -	- -	- -
1992	1 14%	4 36%	2 100%	- -	- -	- -
1994	2 50%	3 21%	1 33%	- -	- -	- -
1995	0 0%	5 28%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1996	1 33%	9 60%	2 100%	- -	0 0%	- -
1998	2 40%	4 36%	1 25%	- -	- -	- -
1999	4 80%	4 29%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
2000	3 38%	3 30%	2 67%	- -	- -	- -
2002	1 14%	4 40%	2 67%	- -	- -	- -
2003	5 71%	3 27%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
2004	12 44%	11 42%	3 43%	- -	- -	- -
2006	3 30%	7 51%	3 100%	- -	- -	- -
2007	3 30%	5 40%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Wirral

Wirral is a peninsula in the North West of England with the River Dee to the west, the Mersey to the east and by the Irish Sea to the north. Wirral developed as an engineering and manufacturing area by the sea. The chemical and oil refining plant at Ellesmere Port is still operating. Traditionally the docklands provided much employment and similar to Tyneside the decline of traditional industries has created unemployment and areas of deprivation. There are wide variations within the borough with more affluent areas in the south and west and least affluent in the east. The index of deprivation for England and Wales places five of Wirral's 22 wards, Bidston, Birkenhead, Leasowe, Seacombe and Tranmere amongst the worst 5% nationally, Bidston is ranked as the worst for child poverty in England and Wales.

The proportion of women standing for the Conservative party is less variable than the percentage that stands for Labour. For instance, the Labour party has two remarkably low years, 1982 and 1988 when the proportion drops to 5%. This is against the national trend of an increased proportion of women candidates during the 1980s. The Liberal Democrat party is very competitive in this borough usually fielding the same number of candidates as either the Conservative or Labour parties. Their proportion of women candidates also fluctuates and is not noticeably higher than the other two parties especially recently. Table 4.31 shows that it is the Green party that has the high proportions and frequently high numbers of women candidates. In some years the Green party has more than twice the percentage of women than each of the main parties and as many or more women standing.

Table 4.31. Women Candidates in Wirral by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	4 6%	6 9%	3 7%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1975	5 23%	3 14%	3 16%	- -	0 0%	1 50%
1976	5 22%	6 26%	3 14%	- -	0 0%	1 33%
1978	8 35%	6 26%	5 29%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1979	5 22%	3 13%	2 12%	- -	- -	0 0%
1980	6 26%	5 22%	5 26%	1 100%	- -	0 0%
1982	5 23%	1 5%	4 18%	0 0%	- -	- -
1983	5 23%	5 23%	4 18%	- -	1 50%	- -
1984	4 18%	3 14%	4 18%	0 0%	0 0%	- -
1986	6 25%	4 17%	3 13%	2 25%	- -	0 0%
1987	6 25%	4 17%	7 29%	5 45%	- -	0 0%
1988	5 23%	1 5%	9 41%	9 50%	- -	0 0%
1990	6 26%	7 30%	7 30%	12 55%	- -	- -
1991	7 30%	6 26%	9 39%	11 48%	0 0%	- -
1992	5 24%	5 23%	9 41%	12 55%	- -	0 0%
1994	7 29%	7 29%	7 30%	0 0%	- -	- -
1995	8 38%	8 36%	6 27%	2 33%	- -	- -
1996	5 25%	6 27%	5 23%	5 83%	1 100%	- -
1998	7 35%	10 42%	5 21%	10 56%	- -	0 0%
1999	9 41%	10 45%	6 27%	9 50%	- -	0 0%
2000	9 41%	7 32%	4 18%	10 53%	- -	- -
2002	8 36%	7 32%	3 14%	6 55%	1 100%	- -
2003	6 27%	6 27%	6 27%	5 36%	- -	3 33%
2004	26 39%	22 35%	22 33%	8 47%	- -	4 50%
2006	11 50%	9 41%	5 23%	13 59%	- -	1 20%
2007	10 45%	7 32%	2 9%	12 55%	0 0%	3 50%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

From 1975 until 1986 the Conservative party dominates the council winning about three-quarters of the seats. The proportions of Conservative women elected are much smaller than the proportions selected, sometimes the difference is 10% or more.

Table 4.32 shows that the election in 1986 alters the balance between the main parties; this is the first year that results in more Labour councillors being elected than Conservatives. The Labour party gradually increased their share of seats from five in 1975 to ten by 1986. There is no consistent

association between the proportions of women standing for Labour and the proportion of women who win seats. During the 1980s the proportion elected exceeds the proportion selected. This is reversed for the later elections. The Liberal Democrats win few seats but the proportion of women elected is usually higher than the proportion standing.

Table 4.32 Women Councillors in Wirral by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	2 7%	5 21%	2 15%	- -	- -	- -
1975	2 13%	1 20%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1976	2 12%	0 0%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1978	5 36%	2 33%	1 33%	- -	- -	- -
1979	2 17%	1 11%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1980	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1982	2 18%	0 0%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1983	2 18%	1 13%	1 33%	- -	- -	- -
1984	2 17%	0 0%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1986	2 22%	0 0%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1987	3 30%	2 20%	2 50%	- -	- -	- -
1988	1 14%	1 8%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1990	1 13%	3 21%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1991	4 36%	2 22%	1 33%	- -	- -	- -
1992	2 17%	2 25%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1994	1 17%	3 20%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
1995	1 25%	5 33%	1 33%	- -	- -	- -
1996	2 33%	3 23%	1 33%	- -	- -	- -
1998	2 29%	3 23%	1 25%	- -	- -	- -
1999	0 0%	5 38%	2 50%	- -	- -	- -
2000	3 33%	3 38%	2 40%	- -	- -	- -
2002	2 33%	3 27%	0 0%	- -	- -	- -
2003	2 25%	2 25%	3 50%	- -	- -	- -
2004	6 29%	8 31%	6 32%	- -	- -	- -
2006	2 29%	4 50%	2 29%	- -	- -	- -
2007	2 29%	1 13%	1 14%	- -	- -	- -

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

4.7.3 Metropolitan Boroughs with Low Proportion of Women Candidates

Knowsley

Knowsley is in Merseyside in the North West of England and is part of the City of Liverpool Region. This metropolitan borough includes the towns of Kirkby, Prescot, Huyton, Whiston, Halewood and Cronton.

The proportion of women candidates in Knowsley varies greatly during this period, in 1973 the borough is slightly above average and in 2007 once again just above average. In between there has been extreme variation, some years the percentage ranged between 3% and 10% in the early 1980s but has been as high as 35% in 1990s.

The very low percentages in 1982 and 1983 are the result of steep decreases in women standing for all parties and the absence of women for the minor parties. In Wirral the Labour party had a small proportion of women standing in the early 1980s but Knowsley seems extraordinary with a dramatic decrease across all parties, (Table 4.33). This occurred at a time when the average proportion of women standing for local election in England was increasing, (Borisjuk et al 2007). The Conservative party are the first to recover and recruit women candidates and the party continues to have the highest proportion of women candidates for most elections. From 1979 onwards the Conservative party does not contest all seats, sometimes half to two-thirds of the number of Labour party candidates. From 2003 the party has very few candidates in 2004 the whole council election the Conservative party has six candidates whereas the Labour party sixty-three and Liberal Democrats have fifty.

Table 4.33 Women Candidates in Knowsley by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	11 24%	5 8%	4 17%	- -	0 0%	2 13%
1975	2 9%	2 9%	3 25%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1976	3 14%	2 9%	1 10%	- -	0 0%	1 7%
1978	6 26%	3 13%	2 67%	- -	0 0%	1 25%
1979	6 30%	1 5%	0 0%	- -	0 0%	1 100%
1980	1 6%	3 14%	0 0%	- -	0 0%	1 50%
1982	0 0%	1 4%	1 7%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1983	1 5%	1 4%	0 0%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1984	2 13%	2 8%	1 8%	- -	0 0%	- -
1986	7 41%	2 8%	3 19%	- -	0 0%	- -
1987	7 37%	1 5%	1 7%	- -	0 0%	- -
1988	6 60%	5 23%	6 33%	- -	1 20%	- -
1990	3 38%	3 14%	1 33%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1991	5 42%	1 4%	0 0%	0 0%	2 67%	3 33%
1992	5 36%	4 17%	1 11%	0 0%	3 75%	0 0%
1994	4 31%	2 9%	0 0%	- -	3 50%	0 0%
1995	5 45%	3 13%	0 0%	- -	1 25%	0 0%
1996	6 40%	4 18%	0 0%	- -	0 0%	- -
1998	5 33%	5 23%	1 25%	- -	1 20%	0 0%
1999	6 46%	3 14%	2 33%	- -	0 0%	1 25%
2000	4 29%	3 14%	7 50%	- -	0 0%	1 50%
2002	5 38%	8 36%	10 67%	0 0%	0 0%	1 14%
2003	1 25%	4 17%	6 33%	2 67%	0 0%	0 0%
2004	2 33%	13 21%	14 28%	2 50%	0 0%	0 0%
2006	1 50%	6 27%	2 13%	- -	- -	0 0%
2007	4 50%	8 35%	5 33%	- -	0 0%	0 0%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

The Labour party win most of the seats in this borough and the proportion of women elected is in accordance with the proportion selected for most years. Table 4.34 shows that the Conservatives have no councillors since 1994. Despite the lack of election success the Conservative party continued to recruit a higher proportion of women candidates than Labour, particularly since 1986, (Table 4.33). The Liberal Democrats have more election success since 2002 and the proportion of women elected equals or exceeds the proportion selected.

Table 4.34 Women Councillors in Knowsley by Political Party

Year	n.	+	%	n.	+	%	n.	+	%	n.	+	%	n.	+	%	n.	+	%
	Female Conservative			Female Labour			Female Lib Dems			Female Green			Female Independent			Female Other		
1973	1		17%	4		8%	1		25%	-	-	-	-	-	-	1		100%
1975	1		14%	1		8%	0		0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	0		0%
1976	1		10%	2		15%	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
1978	1		20%	1		6%	1		100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
1979	1		33%	1		5%	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
1980	0		0%	3		15%	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
1982	0		0%	1		6%	1		50%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
1983	0		0%	1		5%	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
1984	1		25%	2		10%	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
1986	1		100%	2		9%	-		-	-	-	0		0%	-	-		-
1987	0		0%	1		5%	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
1988	0		0%	3		16%	-		-	-	-	1		50%	-	-		-
1990	0		0%	3		14%	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
1991	0		0%	1		4%	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
1992	0		0%	2		11%	-		-	-	-	3		100%	-	-		-
1994	-		-	2		9%	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
1995	-		-	3		13%	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
1996	-		-	4		19%	0		0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
1998	-		-	5		23%	-		-	-	-	1		100%	-	-		-
1999	-		-	3		14%	0		0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
2000	-		-	2		11%	0		0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
2002	-		-	6		32%	2		67%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
2003	-		-	3		17%	2		40%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
2004	-		-	11		21%	4		36%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
2006	-		-	5		29%	1		20%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
2007	-		-	5		28%	4		80%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

Oldham

Oldham is in the North West of England part of Greater Manchester.

During the 19th century Oldham developed as a textile manufacturing town, one of the first industrialised towns in England; a centre for cotton mills and spinning. Situated in the Pennines the land is unsuitable for arable farming and was traditionally a sheep rearing area. The demise of textile processing in the twentieth century caused unemployment. However, Oldham has restored a strong manufacturing base including food processing for Marks & Spencer and newspaper publishing for the Mirror Group.

Oldham is another borough where the proportion of women candidates varies greatly throughout this period, in 1973 the borough is slightly above average but in 2007 below average. In between there has been extreme variation, some years the percentage has been as low as 5% and others as high as 40%. As Table 4.35 shows both the Labour party and Liberal Democrats have sharp drops in the percentage of women standing.

Table 4.35 Women Candidates in Oldham by Political Party

Year	n . + % Female Conservative	n . + % Female Labour	n . + % Female Lib Dems	n . + % Female Green	n . + % Female Independent	n . + % Female Other
1973	7 13%	9 16%	6 25%	- -	0 0%	1 17%
1975	2 12%	3 16%	3 20%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1976	2 10%	1 5%	0 0%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1978	2 10%	3 15%	0 0%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1979	5 21%	3 13%	2 25%	- -	- -	0 0%
1980	4 19%	3 14%	0 0%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1982	3 15%	1 5%	3 15%	- -	0 0%	- -
1983	4 20%	1 5%	4 22%	- -	- -	0 0%
1984	6 29%	2 10%	0 0%	- -	- -	0 0%
1986	4 20%	8 38%	4 19%	0 0%	0 0%	- -
1987	3 15%	5 25%	5 25%	1 50%	0 0%	0 0%
1988	8 40%	1 5%	6 35%	1 50%	0 0%	2 67%
1990	8 40%	5 26%	10 50%	- -	0 0%	2 67%
1991	4 20%	5 25%	8 40%	- -	0 0%	0 0%
1992	5 25%	4 20%	8 40%	- -	0 0%	- -
1994	6 35%	4 20%	7 35%	- -	1 50%	- -
1995	3 16%	5 25%	9 45%	- -	0 0%	- -
1996	3 18%	3 15%	8 40%	- -	1 25%	- -
1998	4 24%	2 10%	5 25%	- -	1 25%	1 100%
1999	3 18%	4 20%	7 35%	- -	- -	0 0%
2000	4 24%	1 5%	9 45%	1 25%	0 0%	0 0%
2002	4 24%	3 15%	5 25%	2 33%	1 33%	1 14%
2003	5 26%	4 20%	4 20%	2 25%	0 0%	1 6%
2004	10 26%	13 22%	18 31%	5 38%	1 14%	1 13%
2006	1 5%	9 45%	4 20%	5 36%	0 0%	2 40%
2007	2 12%	5 25%	5 26%	2 33%	1 17%	1 13%

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

The low percentage of women for the Liberal Democrats tends to be the years when they contest fewer seats, e.g. 1978 and 1980. From 1986 they contest most or all seats and the percentage of women candidates rises again. This is

not the explanation for the decreases in percentage of women standing for the Labour party, Labour candidates contest all or most seats every election.

Although the Conservative party have fewer candidates since 1994 the proportion of women standing is often higher than Labour candidates.

Table 4.36 Women Councillors in Oldham by Political Party

Year	n	+	%	n	+	%	n	+	%	n	+	%	n	+	%
	Female Conservative			Female Labour			Female Lib Dems			Female Green			Female Independent		
1973	0		0%	6		14%	1		13%	-		-	0		0%
1975	1		8%	0		0%	2		40%	-		-	-		-
1976	2		13%	0		0%	-		-	-		-	-		-
1978	1		9%	2		22%	-		-	-		-	-		-
1979	2		29%	1		7%	0		0%	-		-	-		-
1980	1		17%	2		14%	0		0%	-		-	-		-
1982	1		17%	1		8%	1		50%	-		-	-		-
1983	1		20%	1		7%	0		0%	-		-	-		-
1984	1		20%	2		13%	0		0%	-		-	-		-
1986	1		100%	6		38%	1		25%	-		-	-		-
1987	0		0%	2		17%	0		0%	-		-	-		-
1988	-		-	1		7%	2		40%	-		-	-		-
1990	-		-	3		20%	1		20%	-		-	-		-
1991	0		0%	1		9%	2		29%	-		-	-		-
1992	2		40%	1		13%	4		57%	-		-	-		-
1994	-		-	1		9%	2		22%	-		-	-		-
1995	-		-	3		27%	3		38%	-		-	0		0%
1996	-		-	1		8%	3		43%	-		-	-		-
1998	-		-	1		8%	2		25%	-		-	-		-
1999	0		0%	2		25%	4		36%	-		-	-		-
2000	0		0%	0		0%	6		50%	-		-	-		-
2002	-		-	1		7%	2		33%	-		-	-		-
2003	0		0%	4		31%	2		33%	-		-	-		-
2004	0		0%	9		28%	8		32%	-		-	0		0%
2006	0		0%	4		50%	2		20%	-		-	0		0%
2007	1		50%	2		22%	2		22%	-		-	-		-

Source: Local Elections database, University of Plymouth

The first election was successful for the Labour party with 42 councillors, the Conservative party have six and the Liberals eight. For the next three elections the Conservative party is the most popular but thereafter the Labour party wins most seats until 1999 when the Liberal Democrats win eleven, the Conservative party, one and the Labour Party have eight. As Table 4.36 shows

the Conservative party win no seats at seven elections and for a further eight elections the party wins seats but has no women elected. However, the party recruits women candidates for all elections and sometimes a higher proportion than Labour. Since 1988 the Liberal Democrats have consistently higher proportions of women councillors than the Labour party.

4.7.4 Metropolitan Boroughs: Conclusions

The average proportion of women candidates in the metropolitan boroughs has risen from 12% in 1973 to 30% by 2007. Although the proportion of women standing in metropolitan borough elections was lower in 1973 than in the shire districts there is very little difference by 2006. Across all metropolitan boroughs from 1990 the Liberal Democrats have the highest percentage of women amongst the main parties. The Green party have their first women candidates in 1980. Although the numbers are relatively small they quickly recruit a higher proportion of women candidates than the main parties until 1994, thereafter the Green party's proportion of women candidates remains high but is matched or exceeded by the Liberal Democrats at some elections. These boroughs do not have high proportion of women candidates for minor parties or Independent women standing. One difference between the boroughs with high proportion of women candidates and those two with low proportions are the presence or absence of minor party candidates. For instance in North Tyneside the proportion of women candidates is greatly enhanced by the Green party and Independent women whose presence contributes to the relatively high ranking for North Tyneside compared with other boroughs.

4. 8 Conclusions: Women in Local Government

In English local elections across all authorities women now comprise approximately 30% of candidates and that figure has remained constant for about ten years. Although there is variation between local authorities; some authorities have higher proportions of women candidates and some much lower. Within this variation there are differences between the main parties and the presence of women candidates for smaller parties often make a large difference to the overall proportion for an authority.

In the London boroughs the less successful parties have a greater proportion of women candidates, sometimes twice as many as the winning party. In three boroughs, Kensington and Chelsea, Hounslow and Tower Hamlets, the most successful party has the lowest proportion of women candidates. However, the borough of Camden is different; the Labour party win most seats and has a high proportion of women candidates this ranges from 30% to 46% since 1982.

A comparison of the demographics of these four boroughs reveals major differences between Camden and Kensington with their high participation rate of women standing for election and Hounslow and Tower Hamlets. The census returns for 2001 show that boroughs of Camden and Kensington and Chelsea have an unusually high percentage of residents with university education. Hounslow and Tower Hamlets have a much lower percentage of graduates. This difference in education could be a contributory factor in the differing rates of women's participation. Within these four boroughs there are also major differences in the ethnicity of the residents. Almost three quarters of residents in Camden are "white" and the percentage for Kensington is higher at 79%.

Hounslow has 65% white residents and Tower Hamlets has 51.4% white. Both boroughs with a low proportion of women standing have a relatively high percentage of Southern Asian residents whose traditional values do not encourage women to participate in political life.

A comparison of the social demographics of the six district councils revealed some differences between those with high participation rate of women standing compared with those with lower proportions. The overwhelming majority of residents in these districts are "white" there are no significant ethnic minority groups. The proportion of Guildford and South Bucks' residents with degree qualifications is high but this is not so in Spelthorne. A comparison of the census details concerning ethnicity and educational qualifications in these districts do not appear to contribute towards an understanding of the differences in women's levels of participation. What seems to be more convincing is the difference in the density of population between Teesdale, Eden and the other four districts. Teesdale and Eden are sparsely populated rural authorities dominated by Independent candidates. The main political parties do not feature prominently in these district elections. I suspect that it is the absence of local party networks and support in these districts that reduces women's rates of participation.

The most notable difference between the metropolitan boroughs with high proportions of women candidates and those two with low proportions are the presence or absence of minor party candidates. For instance in North Tyneside the proportion of women candidates is greatly enhanced by the Green party and Independent women whose presence contributes to the relatively high ranking for North Tyneside compared with other boroughs.

Overall, these boroughs do not have high proportions of women candidates for minor parties or Independent women standing. The relatively high proportions of women candidates for the Green party and other small parties can be seen to differentiate between some of the authorities with higher than average proportions of women standing. A comparison of the census demographic profiles for boroughs revealed some differences that may affect women's participation.

I have identified differences in the proportions of women candidates and councillors for the selected authorities but are unable to say why these variations occur by simply looking at aggregate data. There are some factors at the authority level that suggest reasons for the high or low proportions of women candidates. For instance the large differences in population density between rural and urban districts may assist or hinder party recruitment and support for women candidates. The two London boroughs with an unusually high percentage of middle class residents with university education also had a high proportion of women candidates. Councillors are known to be disproportionately drawn from well-educated and professional or managerial occupations and there may be an association between authorities with residents who are well-educated and affluent and high proportions of women candidates. Also, the recruitment of women candidates is difficult in areas that have a high percentage of Muslim residents. All these factors are worthy of further investigation using individual level data approach which is the subject of the next chapter. Chapter 5 is a report on the opinions and experiences of individuals who stood for the local elections in 2006. The survey included questions about candidate recruitment and the shortage of women candidates.

Chapter 5: 2006 Survey Data Analysis.

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter was a preliminary exploration of women's under-representation in local government by examining aggregate level data to identify historical trends of women's electoral participation within parties and /or authorities over time. This chapter reports on the findings from the main primary data collection, a postal survey of candidates standing for election in 2006. Section two serves as a reminder of the research objectives, background to the research and why a candidate survey is appropriate. In the third section the stages in the survey analysis are explained including the bivariate analysis of this chapter and the multivariate analysis of chapter 6. The third section continues with sub-sections, first is the representativeness of the respondents and then continues through the questionnaire responses emphasising the similarities and differences between the responses of men and women.

5.2 Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

The main objective of this survey is to identify the motives for standing and establish whether there are any statistically significant differences between men and women candidates. The percentage of women candidates standing for election in all types of English local authorities in England was 16% in 1964. The following years brought a gradual increase in the proportion of women standing such that by the early 1990s the level had almost doubled. However, since then the rate of growth has stopped, suggesting barriers to the progress of women in challenging for and winning local political office. Accordingly, the main research question concerns increasing our understanding of the dynamics

of women's representation in local government. Why, after a period of almost continual growth, has the rate of progress stopped?

Various local government modernisation initiatives introduced since 1997 are aimed towards attracting a greater level of public interest in the work of councils and more diversity amongst councillors. To date there have been a few small-scale studies of the motives of people prepared to stand for election and these were predominantly with serving councillors and not all candidates, (Bochel & Bochel 2000, and Barron, Crawley & Wood 1991), (see sections 2.10 & 2.11). In 2003, as part of my Master's degree programme, I conducted a postal survey of all candidates standing for local elections in Devon. The Local Election Candidate Survey 2003, in Devon is the first known census of candidates standing for local election in England. Whilst there have been previous quantitative studies examining the motives of councillors when standing, (I&DeA 1997, 2001 & 2004), it is surprising that none had addressed unsuccessful candidates. This survey will examine whether the unelected candidates differ from councillors and provide information about a large number of candidates that has not been collected previously.

The Local Election Candidate Survey, 2006, was the most extensive ever undertaken in England. A questionnaire was sent to candidates standing in local elections for 176 authorities covering the London and metropolitan boroughs together with a range of unitary and shire district authorities. A total of 15,253 candidates contested the 2006 election and a postal questionnaire was sent to the home addresses of 2,800 of them, approximately a one in five random sample. Just over 40%, (1,182) of the sample completed the questionnaire. The findings from the survey are reported in the next sections of the chapter.

5.3 Stages in Survey Data analysis.

The responses have been entered onto an SPSS file; there are 146 variables and 1,182 respondents. Firstly, frequency tables for each variable were produced, the coding was checked and errors corrected. The first stage of the data analysis has been exploratory, looking at each variable separately using univariate statistics to observe the responses.

The second stage was to begin to use bivariate analysis to look at possible associations between the variables. In particular to see if there were any significant differences in the opinions, values and experiences of men and women. Contingency tables were produced by crosstabulating two variables in SPSS. Hypothesizing that there would be no differences in the responses of men and women, chi-square tests were used to test the null hypotheses. The significant results are reported but the chi-square tables are not printed here, (see chapter 6).

The next stage in the data analyses was to use multivariate analyses to work with three variables at a time. Multivariate techniques that use linear regression may not be the best methods for this project because of the nature of the variables. This dataset has many variables that are categorical and ordinal rather than interval.

The analysis of contingency tables continued with a series of six multivariate models, (see chapter 6). Loglinear modelling is preferable to using stand alone cross-tabulation and chi-square tests, because it considers the relationship between more than two categorical variables simultaneously. This method allows hypotheses testing about significance/non significance of particular multi-way associations/interactions. Loglinear modelling does not

require a separation of variables into dependent and explanatory, rather it treats all variable alike as “response variables” whose mutual associations are explored, (Knoke & Burke 1980).

5.3.1 Analysis of the Representativeness of the respondents

This is a random sample of the candidates standing in 2006 but I wish to make inferences about all local election candidates and this will be based on the representativeness of our sample. For a number of important variables we can assess the sample against all candidates. I know the number of candidates who stood for the main parties and within the types of authority and the proportion of women who stood. So I am able to report on the respondents compared with all candidates.

Table 5.1 shows that survey respondents were exceptionally representative of gender and party political profile of all candidates standing in 2006. For these two key variables I can be confident that the conclusions are applicable to candidates as a whole. Unfortunately I have an over-response from district candidates and under-response from London boroughs and metropolitan authorities. It is difficult to assess whether this imbalance will affect the focus of analysis but if significant differences in candidates’ opinions emerge from comparing authority types then the data will be weighted to counter this effect.

Table 5.1 Gender, party description & local authority of all candidates in England & survey respondents

Gender	England %	Survey %	% Difference
Male	69	67	-2
Female	31	33	+2
Count	15,253	1,182	n/a
Description	England %	Survey %	% Difference
Conservative	28	28	0
Labour	27	26	-1
Liberal Democrat	24	27	+3
Green Party	9	9	0
UKIP	2	3	+1
BNP	2	1	-1
Independents	4	3	-1
Others, small parties	4	3	-1
Authority	England	Survey %	% Difference
Metropolitan	21	16	-5
Unitary	9	8	-1
District	29	43	+14
London Boroughs	41	33	-9

Sources: *Local Elections database, University of Plymouth & Local Election Candidate Survey 2006*

Nationally, women councillors constitute approximately 29% of elected members in local authorities, (LGC Elections Centre 2006 & I&DeA 2006). That ratio is broadly reflected by survey respondents who stood for Conservative and Labour; there was a slightly higher response from Liberal Democrat women but as Table 5.2 demonstrates the notable exception was the Green party with more women than men.

In the following custom tables of crosstabulation with gender as the column variable, the percentage shown will be column %, unless labelled otherwise.

Table 5.2 Candidate gender by party.

		gender			
		Male		Female	
Parties coded	Conservative	219	28.3%	105	27.4%
	Labour	216	27.9%	91	23.8%
	Lib dem	201	26.0%	108	28.2%
	Green	48	6.2%	56	14.6%
	UKIP	26	3.4%	4	1.0%
	BNP	14	1.8%	1	.3%
	Independent	26	3.4%	11	2.9%
	Others	24	3.1%	7	1.8%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

5.3.2 Analysis of survey questions

The data analysis now begins with a short description of respondents' social characteristics. This is followed by a series of bivariate analyses to compare the responses of men and women exploring a number of questions. First, are the characteristics of candidates, for example, age, ethnicity and occupation, significantly different for men and women and are unelected candidates different from those who have been councillors? It is known from previous surveys of councillors that they are unrepresentative of the population as a whole, (see section 2.12) but what is unknown is whether this is true of the unsuccessful candidates. Second, what are the key characteristics of candidates in terms of their previous political and community involvement? (see section 2.3). In what sense is the pool of candidates a rather narrowly defined set of characteristics and experiences that point to the existence almost of local establishments? Third, what makes someone stand for election to local government, (see section 2.12), especially when those that serve on local

councils appear to receive frequent criticism in the local press? Fourth, how arduous is the process of candidate selection (see section 2.11); is the struggle for local political office real or not? Fifth, do the candidates themselves approve of the selection process and what do they feel about the prospects for introducing change that might broaden the social base amongst councillors, (see section 2.12). Sixth, are candidates realistic about their prospects of winning and how did they approach the campaign itself?

The findings from the bivariate analyses represent the exploratory stage, to see if the crosstabulations and chi-square tests for significance reveal any relationships between the variables. If the observed significance of the chi-square value is low, less than 0.05, ($p < 0.05$) this will be reported as a significant result. The null hypothesis will be rejected and I can conclude that there is a relationship between the variables.

The selected variables are consistent with knowledge from previous empirical studies and social science theory that explored the under-representation of women to elected office. The bivariate analyses inform a more detailed examination of the data by testing loglinear models, although the most widely used method of multivariate analysis in political science for the past fifty years is ordinary least squares regression analysis, (John 2002). This is normally used to predict numerical values on an interval or ratio scale variable. However, this dataset comprises categorical variables; therefore loglinear modelling is better suited to multivariate analysis.

5.4 Candidate characteristics

The proportion of men and women who responded to this survey is 67% men and 33% women, a close match to the national profile this year, (see Table 5.1). Nationally, 31% of candidates are women and although that proportion was slightly higher in 2002 there has been no sustainable increase since 1995, (Borisjuk et al. 2007). So far there is no evidence that modernisation initiatives have increased the proportion of women councillors, currently women comprise 29% of councillors. This is a disappointing outcome and I hope that the survey responses will provide some explanations for the reluctance of women to stand for election.

The social characteristics of respondents show that they are overwhelmingly white, middle-aged and well educated and this applies equally to men and women. More than 90% describe themselves as being “white”, 5% are Asian and 2% are from Afro-Caribbean descent (see Table 5.3).

Table 5.3 Candidate gender by ethnicity

		gender			
		Male		Female	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Your ethnic background	White	672	90.3%	348	94.3%
	Asian	42	5.6%	12	3.3%
	Caribbean	19	2.6%	4	1.1%
	Jewish	8	1.1%	5	1.4%
	Other	3	.4%	0	.0%
	Total	744	100.0%	369	100.0%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

The number of respondents who describe themselves as “non-white” is very small, only 77. They are mostly men, 42 Asian and 19 Afro-Caribbean. Unfortunately the ethnicity of all candidates is unknown and so it is not possible to assess whether this small number truly reflects their presence amongst

candidates or represents an under-response from ethnic minority candidates. I do know that there are approximately 178 black and Asian women councillors in Britain. Equalities Secretary, Harriet Harman told the Labour Party conference in 2007 that this is a “shameful under-representation of black and Asian women and to be representative there should be nearly 1,000” (BBC news 24 / 09/ 07). Two of the councillors interviewed, (see section 7.5.4), speak of the particular difficulties in the recruitment of Asian women which leads me to conclude that Asian women candidates are also rare.

Table 5.4 shows that standing for local election is still predominantly undertaken by middle-aged and older persons. Six in ten of the women respondents are over 50 years old. Although there is not a great difference between the proportions of men and women in the four age groups, one age group, 51 – 65 years, shows a higher percentage of women than men.

Table 5.4 Candidate gender by age groups

		gender			
		Male		Female	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
age groups (4cat)	21 -35 years	117	15.5%	52	13.9%
	36-50 years	209	27.6%	97	25.9%
	51- 65 years	303	40.0%	165	44.1%
	66-90 years	128	16.9%	60	16.0%
	Total	757	100.0%	374	100.0%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

A possible explanation for the increased proportion of women candidates in this age group was supplied by anecdotal evidence from a previous survey, conducted in Devon in 2003. A candidate from Teignbridge wrote:

“I think a woman decides to go into politics once she has less domestic responsibilities, e.g. no children to look after, then she has more time available”

Women respondents report a long-standing interest in their local community and had been asked to stand previously but waited until their children had left home before agreeing to stand, (Shears 2004). Another possibility is that many women retire at an earlier age than men and stand for election at a younger age.

Over half of the respondents are graduates, Table 5.5 shows that there are very slight differences between men and women but candidates are still drawn disproportionately from better qualified persons than the general population.

Table 5.5 Candidate gender by educational qualifications

		gender			
		Male		Female	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
highest educational qualification	No qualifications	46	6.2%	21	5.7%
	GCSE	120	16.3%	59	16.0%
	A level	143	19.4%	75	20.3%
	First degree	259	35.1%	125	33.9%
	Higher degree	170	23.0%	89	24.1%
	Total	738	100.0%	369	100.0%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Almost half of English councillors hold a degree level qualification and above compared with 30% of the population, (Idea/LGA/LGAR 2007). Almost eight in ten describe their current or former, (if retired) occupational status as professional or managerial, once again not typical of the general public. Table 5.6 demonstrates that the main differences between men and women are that a greater percentage of men have managerial or technical occupations and a higher proportion of women describe their occupational status as professional. This is not surprising because there are many female candidates from education and health care professions. Over half the women have or had

professional occupations and it should be expected that candidates with this background would have the confidence to stand. One of the interviewees explains that through her employment she gained skills and confidence that many women lack, (see section 7.5.2) However, amongst professional people the ratio of men and women is nearly 2:1 so perhaps the informal "old boys network" for recruitment is in operation, (see section 2.8).

Table 5.6: Candidate gender by occupational status

		gender			
		Male		Female	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Current or previous occupational status	Professional occupation	372	49.2%	199	53.9%
	Managerial/technical occupation	237	31.3%	83	22.5%
	Skilled occupation, non manual	48	6.3%	57	15.4%
	Skilled occupation, manual	56	7.4%	8	2.2%
	Partly skilled occupation	29	3.8%	12	3.3%
	Unskilled occupation	14	1.9%	10	2.7%
	Total	756	100.0%	369	100.0%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Nearly two-thirds were currently employed, 38% full time, 11% part time and 16% self-employed, while over a quarter, 26% are retired. Whereas quite a high proportion of candidates are employed, the ratio alters when councillors and unelected candidates' occupation are compared, (as discussed below). Table 5.7 shows clear disparity between the occupation of men and women. Although similar proportions of men and women are working; men are more likely to work full-time and women part-time and this is statistically significant. However, this reflects the national pattern of employment rather than a peculiarity of local election candidates; many women combine family commitments with part-time work.

Table 5.7 Candidate gender by occupation

		gender			
		Male		Female	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Which of these best describes your current occupation.	In full-time paid employment	332	43.3%	104	27.4%
	In part-time paid employment	51	6.6%	78	20.6%
	Self-employed	127	16.6%	51	13.5%
	In voluntary occupation	18	2.3%	13	3.4%
	Registered unemployed	19	2.5%	5	1.3%
	Full- time student	11	1.4%	6	1.6%
	Retired	204	26.6%	96	25.3%
	Looking after home/ children...	5	.7%	26	6.9%
	Total	767	100.0%	379	100.0%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

It is ten years since the publication of the 1998 Government White Paper, "Modern Local Government: in touch with the People". This highlighted that various aspects of "the old culture" of local government needed to change in order to improve democratic accountability. One fundamental change was to recognise that "the current body of councillors is not representative of the population as a whole, fewer are drawn from ethnic minorities, many more are over 45 years and many fewer are women... the general position cannot be healthy for local democracy" (DETR 1998, Ch 3: 3.59). The findings from these survey respondents do not offer much hope for imminent change to the social composition of councillors.

5.4.1 Councillors and unelected candidates

There are slight differences between candidates who were elected in 2006 and those who were unsuccessful. Most respondents are drawn from professional / managerial occupations, white, middle-aged and male; regardless of electoral success. Therefore I do not see any evidence of large numbers of different types of people coming forward to challenge incumbents.

Table 5.8 shows that compared with councillors, the candidates who lost include a higher proportion of women and younger people; two of the groups which have been identified as under-represented in councils. In chapter 4 when I described the patterns of women's recruitment there is a history of a higher proportion of women standing for parties that do not win council seats, (e.g. see section 4.6). It is not possible to know from the aggregate data whether this is party recruitment bias by the main parties that favours men in winnable seats or incumbents who block opportunities for new candidates. However the survey shows that women and younger men will stand to support their party and not expect to win.

Table 5.8 Social characteristics of councillors and unelected candidates.

		Elected May 2006 ?			
		Not elected		Elected	
gender	Male	537	65.5%	237	70.3%
	Female	283	34.5%	100	29.7%
Your ethnic background	White	719	91.8%	293	91.0%
	Asian	36	4.6%	18	5.6%
	Caribbean	16	2.0%	7	2.2%
	Jewish	10	1.3%	3	.9%
	Other	2	.3%	1	.3%
ages grouped (7cat)	21-30 years	69	9.0%	20	6.4%
	31-40 years	111	14.5%	43	13.8%
	41-50 years	148	19.4%	59	19.0%
	51-60 years	214	28.0%	86	27.7%
	61-70 years	164	21.5%	85	27.3%
	71-80 years	49	6.4%	18	5.8%
	81-91 years	9	1.2%	0	.0%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

It appears that the parties can attract a slightly broader range of people as candidates, paper candidates sometimes, but in the main, standing to win and commitment to council responsibilities remains disproportionately with middle-aged men. Therefore unless the parties can attract candidates who want to be councillors from the wider community, the situation will not alter very

much. Over half of councillors are aged between 50 and 70 years but the two age groups; 51-60 years and 61-70 years also supplied half of the unelected candidates. Table 5.9 demonstrates that compared with councillors the unelected candidates include a greater proportion of full-time workers and graduates. Once again this most probably reflects the willingness of party members to support the party by standing. During the interviews councillors speak of the difficulties of being an effective councillor and working full-time and say this is the principal reason for the reluctance of many capable people to become councillors, particularly when many councils have daytime meetings, (see section 7.5.2).

Table 5.9 Qualification, occupation and occupational status of councillors and unelected candidates

		Elected May 2006 ?			
		Not elected		Elected	
First degree	Not highest	517	63.7%	242	73.3%
	Highest	294	36.3%	88	26.7%
Higher degree	Not highest	615	76.0%	269	81.0%
	Highest	194	24.0%	63	19.0%
Which of these best describes your current occupation.	In full-time paid employment	326	40.2%	108	32.7%
	In part-time paid employment	89	11.0%	40	12.1%
	Self employed	115	14.2%	61	18.5%
	In voluntary occupation	26	3.2%	7	2.1%
	Registered unemployed	22	2.7%	2	.6%
	Full- time student	14	1.7%	2	.6%
	Retired	199	24.5%	100	30.3%
	Looking after home/ children...	20	2.5%	10	3.0%
	Professional occupation	397	49.9%	168	51.7%
	Managerial/technical occupation	226	28.4%	93	28.6%
Current or previous occupational status	Skilled occupation, non manual	77	9.7%	28	8.6%
	Skilled occupation, manual	46	5.8%	18	5.5%
	Partly skilled occupation	32	4.0%	11	3.4%
	Unskilled occupation	17	2.1%	7	2.2%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Many of these unelected candidates stood with little or no expectation of winning, there is no evidence of any significant overall shifts in the social profile of people who stand and win. However, one small sub-group may show some evidence of change; the new recruits to local elections who became councillors. This dataset has 85 new councillors who won in 2006 as first-time candidates. Overall, they continue to match the "councillor stereotype" of white, well-educated professionals, 89% are white, 48% graduates and 83% professional or managerial. However, there is an increased proportion of women; the balance of men and women was 60 /40, compared with 70 /30 for all councillors who responded and there is a slight increase in those under 50 years old, 55%, compared with 40% of all councillors. (see table 5.10).

New candidates/councillors

These tables, 5.10 – 5.12 show only the respondents who stood for the first time in 2006.

369 new candidates and 85 new councillors.

Table 5.10 Profile of candidates first standing in 2006

		Elected May 2006 ?					
		Not elected		Elected		Total	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
gender	Male	168	60.4%	50	60.2%	218	60.4%
	Female	110	39.6%	33	39.8%	143	39.6%
Your ethnic background	White	238	88.8%	73	89.0%	311	88.9%
	Asian	18	6.7%	4	4.9%	22	6.3%
	Caribbean	6	2.2%	4	4.9%	10	2.9%
	Jewish	5	1.9%	1	1.2%	6	1.7%
	Other	1	.4%	0	.0%	1	.3%
ages grouped (7cat)	21-30 years	48	19.1%	15	19.5%	63	19.2%
	31-40 years	55	21.9%	18	23.4%	73	22.3%
	41-50 years	52	20.7%	9	11.7%	61	18.6%
	51-60 years	54	21.5%	18	23.4%	72	22.0%
	61-70 years	33	13.1%	16	20.8%	49	14.9%
	71-80 years	8	3.2%	1	1.3%	9	2.7%
	81-91 years	1	.4%	0	.0%	1	.3%
highest educational qualification	No qualifications	15	5.6%	4	5.1%	19	5.5%
	GCSE	40	14.9%	20	25.3%	60	17.2%
	A level	43	16.0%	17	21.5%	60	17.2%
	First degree	102	37.9%	26	32.9%	128	36.8%
	Higher degree	69	25.7%	12	15.2%	81	23.3%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Table 5.11 shows that a greater proportion of new councillors are working full-time and the ratio of the retired had decreased to one in five, compared with one in three for all councillors.

Table 5.11 Occupation of candidates first standing in 2006

		Elected May 2006 ?					
		Not elected		Elected		Total	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Which of these best describes your current occupation.	In full-time paid employment	122	44.0%	35	42.7%	157	43.7%
	In part-time paid employment	27	9.7%	4	4.9%	31	8.6%
	Self employed	42	15.2%	16	19.5%	58	16.2%
	In voluntary occupation	8	2.9%	2	2.4%	10	2.8%
	Registered unemployed	12	4.3%	1	1.2%	13	3.6%
	Full- time student	10	3.6%	1	1.2%	11	3.1%
	Retired	45	16.2%	17	20.7%	62	17.3%
	Looking after home/ children...	11	4.0%	6	7.3%	17	4.7%
Current or previous occupational status	Professional occupation	128	48.1%	47	61.0%	175	51.0%
	Managerial/technical occupation	72	27.1%	18	23.4%	90	26.2%
	Skilled occupation, non manual	36	13.5%	3	3.9%	39	11.4%
	Skilled occupation, manual	18	6.8%	4	5.2%	22	6.4%
	Partly skilled occupation	8	3.0%	2	2.6%	10	2.9%
	Unskilled occupation	4	1.5%	3	3.9%	7	2.0%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Whilst this is a small group, 85 new councillors, it may indicate a small improvement in the social base amongst councillors in metropolitan boroughs plus some unitary and shire district authorities. As Table 5.12 demonstrates, more than half of the youngest candidates were standing in the London boroughs.

Table 5.12 Age groups by authority for candidates first standing in 2006

la2 * age groups (4cat) Crosstabulation

			age groups (4cat)				Total
			21 -35 years	36-50 years	51- 65 years	66-90 years	
la2	Metropolitan	Count	8	13	7	5	33
		Expected Count	9.9	9.4	10.5	3.2	33.0
		% within age groups (4cat)	7.5%	13.0%	6.3%	14.7%	9.4%
	District	Count	35	38	42	15	130
		Expected Count	39.1	36.9	41.4	12.6	130.0
		% within age groups (4cat)	33.0%	38.0%	37.5%	44.1%	36.9%
	Unitary	Count	8	13	12	4	37
		Expected Count	11.1	10.5	11.8	3.6	37.0
		% within age groups (4cat)	7.5%	13.0%	10.7%	11.8%	10.5%
	London Borough	Count	55	36	51	10	152
		Expected Count	45.8	43.2	48.4	14.7	152.0
		% within age groups (4cat)	51.9%	36.0%	45.5%	29.4%	43.2%
	Total	Count	106	100	112	34	352
		Expected Count	106.0	100.0	112.0	34.0	352.0
		% within age groups (4cat)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

5.5 Previous Political and Community Involvement

The majority of respondents, 68%, had been candidates in local elections before. Almost 30% had been elected previously. The earliest candidacy was in 1954 but over two thirds of respondents first stood for election in the last 15 years. For the majority of candidates their political involvement is restricted to local elections. However, the difference in previous political experience was noticeable between men and women. Men are more than twice as likely to have stood for Parliament, (10% of men and 4%) of women and a significantly higher proportion of men had held a party office, compared with women, (see Table 5.13 and 5.14)

Table 5.13 Candidate previous political and community experience**Table 1**

		gender			
		Male		Female	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
was Parliamentary candidate previously?	No	692	90%	370	96%
	Yes	76	10%	16	4%
Held a local party office?	No	344	45%	226	59%
	Yes	422	55%	160	41%
Held office in a charitable organisation?	No	483	63%	223	58%
	Yes	284	37%	162	42%
Held office in a professional association?	No	623	81%	329	86%
	Yes	144	19%	55	14%
Held office in a trade union?	No	565	74%	333	86%
	Yes	199	26%	53	14%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Table 5.14 Candidate previous political and community experience**Table 2**

		gender			
		Male		Female	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Held office in a women's organisation?	No	762	99%	316	82%
	Yes	4	1%	69	18%
Served on a local public body?	No	500	65%	243	63%
	Yes	268	35%	141	37%
Had a position of responsibility in a local pressure group?	No	574	75%	273	71%
	Yes	194	25%	113	29%
Had a position of responsibility in a local community group?	No	443	58%	206	53%
	Yes	325	42%	180	47%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Many of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat candidates had previous political and community experience, but a statistically significant greater proportion of the Labour party candidates report previous commitments. This noticeable difference between Labour and other candidates is most likely a result of that party's inclusion of stricter "essential criteria" for prospective candidates, (Wheeler 2006). The three main parties have formal processes for the selection of local candidates and all prefer applicants to be party members and for Labour members this used to be at least a year before the election. The Conservative and Liberal Democrats are described as being more flexible but in areas where there is competition for the nomination, party membership rules are applied.

Overall, half of candidates had held a local party office but there was a significant difference in the proportions for the main parties. Nearly half, 48% of Conservative and Liberal Democrat candidates held party offices but almost three-quarters of Labour candidates had done so. A significantly greater proportion of Labour candidates had also served on a local public body, held a position of responsibility in a local pressure group and / or local community group. Officially, the party recognises this previous involvement as desirable experience for councillors. Amongst the men and women candidates there are no discernible differences in their community involvement, with public bodies, charitable, pressure or community groups. Previous and current participation as elected officials of pressure groups, charitable organisations and local public bodies seem to be strongly linked with participation in local politics. However, it is not possible to know from this survey whether councillors are invited to engage with community groups or that prior experience with community affairs stimulates an interest in formal political involvement. Many candidates comment

that being well-known and having a good reputation are important factors in ensuring selection. Therefore a good local reputation established through community contacts seems to be a useful resource for candidates. Although there is an association between community involvement and standing for election, becoming a candidate does not necessarily follow from this involvement. Research for the Councillors Commission found that many community activists, precisely the type of people who might be approached to stand for election felt that they could be more effective by remaining outside local government, (DCLG 2007). This may affect women more than men because previous research showed that women have a weaker sense of political efficacy than men and they have lower confidence that they can influence the political process, (Norris et al. 2004).

5.6 Why did they stand?

As expected many candidates, especially men, cite wishing to support the party locally as the principal motive for candidacy. A desire to improve their local area is also highly rated. Being asked to stand is very important, particularly for women; almost half say it is the first or second reason for standing, (see Tables 5.15 & 5.16). This finding agrees with the evidence from the Devon survey in 2003 and previous published research that finds that many women are less confident than are men in seeking selection, (see section 2.3).

Table 5.15: Candidate gender by the three reasons for initially standing

		gender			
		Male		Female	
Reasons for standing first time: support party	no	198	25.7%	114	29.5%
	support party, first reason	288	37.5%	125	32.4%
	support party, second reason	180	23.4%	94	24.4%
	support party, third reason	103	13.4%	53	13.7%
Reasons for standing first time: asked to stand	no	345	44.9%	133	34.5%
	asked to stand, first reason	167	21.7%	110	28.5%
	asked to stand, second reason	164	21.3%	91	23.6%
	asked to stand, third reason	93	12.1%	52	13.5%
Reasons for standing first time: thought I could win	no	620	80.8%	330	85.5%
	thought I could win, first reason	18	2.3%	6	1.6%
	thought I could win, second reason	41	5.3%	15	3.9%
	thought I could win, third reason	88	11.5%	35	9.1%
Reasons for standing first time: dissatisfaction with previous councillors	no	597	77.4%	314	81.6%
	dissatisfaction, first reason	31	4.0%	15	3.9%
	dissatisfaction, second reason	56	7.3%	19	4.9%
	dissatisfaction, third reason	87	11.3%	37	9.6%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Table 5.16 Candidate gender by the three reasons for initially standing cont'd)

		gender			
		Male		Female	
Reasons for standing first time: improve area for residents	no	336	43.6%	172	44.8%
	improve area, first reason	150	19.5%	82	21.4%
	improve area, second reason	155	20.1%	85	22.1%
	improve area, third reason	129	16.8%	45	11.7%
Reasons for standing first time: knew people on council	no	577	75.1%	289	74.9%
	knew councillors, first reason	35	4.6%	16	4.1%
	knew councillors, second reason	68	8.9%	27	7.0%
	knew councillors, third reason	88	11.5%	54	14.0%
Reasons for standing first time: felt strongly about issue	no	510	66.2%	250	64.9%
	felt strongly, first reason	89	11.6%	32	8.3%
	felt strongly, second reason	75	9.7%	45	11.7%
	felt strongly, third reason	96	12.5%	58	15.1%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

The candidates were asked to select three reasons for initially standing as a candidate. Almost two thirds select wishing to support party. Being asked to stand is chosen by nearly 60% of candidates. A significantly higher proportion of women than men select being asked to stand as their first reason. Otherwise there are only small differences in the reasons selected by men and women to explain why they first stood. In order of importance for women is first to support my party, second being asked to stand and third wishing to improve the area for residents.

A very small percentage of candidates select as their first reason, standing because they thought they could win the seat, less than 3% of Conservative and Labour respectively and less than 2% of Liberal Democrat candidates. Similarly dissatisfaction with previous council /councillors does not motivate the candidates for the main parties but is more important for Independent candidates. Standing to improve the area for residents is a high priority for Conservative and Independent candidates and an important reason for Labour and Liberal Democrat candidates. As expected many Independent, UKIP, BNP and Green party candidates stand because they feel strongly about an issue, though this should not be interpreted as concern about exclusively local matters because smaller parties take local elections as an opportunity to publicise national and international causes.

Many candidates stand for the first time with positive encouragement from family, friends and party members. Very few say that family and friends disapproved of their decision. It appears that for many respondents the initial decision to stand is strongly influenced by the attitude and support of acquaintances; eight out of ten candidates were asked to stand or did so having

established personal backing for candidacy. There are considerable differences between the proportion of men and women who say they had very positive encouragement from spouse, family and friends. Tables 5.17 & 5.18 show that women candidates report stronger support from family and friends and higher personal encouragement from their party and community. Over half of women say their spouse or partner was very supportive. Although gender differences diminish if very supportive and supportive categories are combined, women are more willing than men to report that they received very positive encouragement in every category.

Table 5.17 Candidate gender by encouragement for initially standing.

		gender			
		Male		Female	
Your spouse or partner	Very positive	207	34.8%	161	55.3%
	Positive	218	36.6%	82	28.2%
	Neutral	129	21.7%	33	11.3%
	Negative	30	5.0%	12	4.1%
	Very negative	11	1.8%	3	1.0%
Other family members	Very positive	163	23.9%	124	35.0%
	Positive	301	44.2%	144	40.7%
	Neutral	190	27.9%	66	18.6%
	Negative	21	3.1%	19	5.4%
	Very negative	6	.9%	1	.3%
Personal friends	Very positive	168	23.6%	112	31.2%
	Positive	371	52.1%	188	52.4%
	Neutral	158	22.2%	55	15.3%
	Negative	11	1.5%	4	1.1%
	Very negative	4	.6%	0	.0%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Table 5.18 Candidate gender by encouragement for initially standing, (cont'd).

		gender			
		Male		Female	
Community groups	Very positive	81	19.0%	52	24.0%
	Positive	171	40.0%	94	43.3%
	Neutral	160	37.5%	69	31.8%
	Negative	13	3.0%	2	.9%
	Very negative	2	.5%	0	.0%
Business associates	Very positive	42	10.0%	33	16.8%
	Positive	154	36.5%	77	39.3%
	Neutral	188	44.5%	77	39.3%
	Negative	28	6.6%	7	3.6%
	Very negative	10	2.4%	2	1.0%
Party members	Very positive	414	57.9%	226	61.9%
	Positive	277	38.7%	122	33.4%
	Neutral	21	2.9%	15	4.1%
	Negative	3	.4%	2	.5%
	Very negative	0	.0%	0	.0%
Party agents	Very positive	355	56.6%	189	61.2%
	Positive	221	35.2%	99	32.0%
	Neutral	46	7.3%	19	6.1%
	Negative	4	.6%	2	.6%
	Very negative	1	.2%	0	.0%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

When asked about the initial decision to stand for selection, less than one in five candidates state that the decision to stand was entirely their own. Almost half say the decision to seek selection was a consequence of being approached or encouraged by others. A further third say it was a combination of a personal decision assisted by supporters. The response to this question reveals significant differences. Almost a quarter of men say it was entirely their own decision to stand compared with less than 10% of women, (see table 5.19). Six in ten women stand as a consequence of being approached, once again providing further evidence to support the belief that women are more likely than men to lack the confidence to present themselves for election. All of which concurs with previous studies that indicate that women have less confidence than men in their own abilities, (Fox 2004).

Table 5.19 Candidate gender by initial decision to put oneself forward for selection

		gender			
		Male		Female	
Initial decision to put yourself forward for selection	Entirely your own	183	24.0%	37	9.7%
	Consequence of being approached	313	41.0%	227	59.7%
	Mixture of personal & supporters	268	35.1%	116	30.5%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

We know very little about the selection of candidates by local parties but if most of our respondents had said it was entirely their own idea to stand we could conclude that certain types of people come forward for selection and that accounts for the current profile of councillors. However, these responses show that most candidates stand because they were approached by party members and councillors. This suggests that party recruiters are successful at attracting people like themselves; this may be that informal social contacts are in operation and that excludes opportunities for under-represented groups. One councillor I interviewed thinks that everyone expects councillors to be white middle-aged men and that is why men nearing retirement, often notable local businessmen are targeted and other equally capable people are not considered.

5.7 Party Selection in 2006

The overall finding shows that political parties often have only one candidate seeking selection for each seat. The main parties like to contest as many seats in local elections as they can and councillors I interviewed speak of pressure from the national party to get candidates, (see section 7.5.1)

Table 5.20 shows that just over a quarter reports a competition for their party selection. An overwhelming majority apply for one seat and only 6% of women try for more than one, (Table 5.21)

Table 5.20 Competition for selection

	More people seeking selection than seats in this ward ?	
	Count	%
No	828	73.9%
Yes	293	26.1%
Total	1121	100.0%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Table 5.21 Candidate gender by selection applications

		gender			
		Male		Female	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Did you apply for more than one seat in 2006 ?	No	678	91.7%	351	94.4%
	Yes	61	8.3%	21	5.6%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Evidence shows that most people emerge as candidates because they were asked to stand and encouraged by family and friends. Candidates think that having a good reputation, being a local resident and prepared to stand as a paper candidate are likely reasons for selection. A significantly higher proportion of men than women select "a good reputation" whereas a significantly higher proportion of women than men, four in ten, choose "prepared to stand as a paper candidate" as the explanation for successful selection, (See Table 5.22). Standing as an incumbent was the reason selected by 22% and 15% said being a councillor previously accounted for selection this year. Overall, a third of candidates feel that being prepared to stand as a paper candidate is the reason for successful selection.

Table 5.22 Candidate gender by two reasons why they were selected in 2006

		gender			
		Male		Female	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Why selected: incumbent	no	603	81.3%	319	84.8%
	Incumbent, first reason	122	16.4%	50	13.3%
	Incumbent, second reason	17	2.3%	7	1.9%
Why selected: previously councillor	no	639	86.1%	322	85.6%
	previously councillor first reason	46	6.2%	30	8.0%
	previously councillor second reason	57	7.7%	24	6.4%
Why selected: local resident	no	512	69.0%	247	65.7%
	local resident, first reason	110	14.8%	63	16.8%
	local resident, second reason	120	16.2%	66	17.6%
Why selected: likely to win seat	no	593	80.1%	304	80.9%
	likely to win, first reason	49	6.6%	25	6.6%
	likely to win, second reason	98	13.2%	47	12.5%
Why selected: good reputation	no	418	56.3%	245	65.2%
	good reputation, first reason	158	21.3%	54	14.4%
	good reputation, second reason	166	22.4%	77	20.5%
Why selected: only volunteer	no	544	73.3%	283	75.3%
	only volunteer, first reason	105	14.2%	42	11.2%
	only volunteer, second reason	93	12.5%	51	13.6%
Why selected: paper candidate	no	511	69.2%	223	59.3%
	paper candidate, first reason	148	20.1%	110	29.3%
	paper candidate, second reason	79	10.7%	43	11.4%
Total		738	100.0%	376	100.0%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

When asked about other factors that contribute to selection, respondents again rated their reputation above previous political experience and community involvement. They believe selectors choose people they know and are prominent in the local community. Age and employment history are less important. Although women are five times more likely than men to think

“gender” contributes to selection it is only 22% of women overall who think that,
(See Tables 5.23 & 5.24).

Table 5. 23 Candidate gender by factors contributing to selection in 2006

		gender					
		Male		Female		Total	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
political experience - helps for successful selection	Very much	291	42.1%	104	31.2%	395	38.5%
	Quite a lot	185	26.7%	87	26.1%	272	26.5%
	Not very much	116	16.8%	77	23.1%	193	18.8%
	Not at all	100	14.5%	65	19.5%	165	16.1%
involvement - helps for successful selection	Very much	223	32.9%	130	37.9%	353	34.6%
	Quite a lot	232	34.2%	117	34.1%	349	34.2%
	Not very much	141	20.8%	55	16.0%	196	19.2%
	Not at all	82	12.1%	41	12.0%	123	12.0%
known to selectors - helps for successful selection	Very much	243	35.6%	126	37.8%	369	36.4%
	Quite a lot	221	32.4%	111	33.3%	332	32.7%
	Not very much	113	16.6%	40	12.0%	153	15.1%
	Not at all	105	15.4%	56	16.8%	161	15.9%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Table 5.24 Candidate gender by factors contributing to selection in 2006, (cont'd)

		gender					
		Male		Female		Total	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
age - helps for successful selection	Very much	32	4.9%	25	8.0%	57	5.9%
	Quite a lot	87	13.4%	39	12.5%	126	13.1%
	Not very much	223	34.4%	94	30.1%	317	33.0%
	Not at all	307	47.3%	154	49.4%	461	48.0%
gender - helps for successful selection	Very much	7	1.1%	38	12.1%	45	4.7%
	Quite a lot	24	3.7%	48	15.3%	72	7.5%
	Not very much	176	27.4%	87	27.8%	263	27.5%
	Not at all	436	67.8%	140	44.7%	576	60.3%
employment - helps for successful selection	Very much	32	4.9%	21	6.6%	53	5.4%
	Quite a lot	93	14.2%	59	18.5%	152	15.6%
	Not very much	144	22.0%	71	22.3%	215	22.1%
	Not at all	387	59.0%	168	52.7%	555	56.9%
reputation - helps for successful selection	Very much	268	38.3%	121	35.9%	389	37.5%
	Quite a lot	286	40.9%	148	43.9%	434	41.9%
	Not very much	91	13.0%	41	12.2%	132	12.7%
	Not at all	54	7.7%	27	8.0%	81	7.8%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Although many candidates are formally interviewed before party nomination, the lack of competitors for many seats implies that selection is guaranteed. One in five think there could be improvements to the system and the most frequent suggestion is to have more volunteers. Many women say it would be better if more people volunteered to stand. Alongside encouraging more people to stand, men think the selection should be made earlier. Those who favour earlier selection say it would allow candidates more time to prepare for the campaign. Several dislike the system that allow decisions to be taken by a small panel and would prefer to see all local members involved. Others comment that falling party membership results in decisions taken by a tiny minority of residents, because only about 1% of the population is a member of a political party. Respondents suggest that party supporters should be invited to open meetings to see the potential candidates or even try "primary" selection meetings as used in the U.S.A. One female candidate goes further and says the community should choose candidates. Some candidates think these changes could improve public perception of local democracy and involve more people in the selection process without any obligation to join a party. Nevertheless these suggestions are qualified by realistic comments acknowledging that it would still be difficult to attract large numbers of people to political meetings. The Councillors Commission report described successful initiatives by local parties to attract a wider range of people to serve on councils and they conclude that it is possible to make progress if the will is there. The Commission recommend greater publicity about the role of councillors and more open recruitment by the parties.

5.8 The campaign

Less than one in ten candidates think their selection could be attributed to "being likely to win" Table 5.22 shows that a little over a fifth of candidates think that "being likely to win the seat this year" is the first or second reason for being selected. Candidates were asked to estimate the probability of winning this election, on a scale of, 1-10, (1 being "highly improbable" and 10 "highly probable"). Less than 10% of the respondents rank their chances of winning this election as 10, (highly probable) and a further 18% select "8" or "9". Over half believe success was improbable, rating their chances between 1 and 4. A higher proportion of women are prepared to stand with little expectation of winning, a finding that is consistent with the numbers of women who were paper candidates. Confidence in winning is predictably associated with those who had been councillors previously, 70% of those who rate their chances of winning at "10" and 68% who select "9" had been elected before. Also, almost a half who thought success is highly probable was aged between 51 and 70 years. Candidates amongst the youngest age group, 21-30 years mostly stand with little hope of success, only 2% think winning was "highly probable" Some of the youngest candidates comment that local elections are a good opportunity to become known in the local party as preparation for future parliamentary selection. Others who work for MPs said it is good practice to support the local party, on whose support they rely at general elections.

Most of these candidates entered the campaign expecting election defeat; a consequence of the first past the post system. Nevertheless, many were involved with the campaign, assisting in other wards. One Green party candidate explains why she did not deliver leaflets nor visit households in her ward.

"Please note that I was very involved in canvassing a ward that we targeted, we concentrate our efforts on one ward as we don't have enough party members to canvass all wards"

More than half visited households and nearly three quarters produced and delivered campaign leaflets. More than eight in ten report their leaflets had been delivered to all addresses in their ward with assistance from party members or friends. The traditional leaflets continue to be the most widespread method used by candidates to inform the residents about themselves and their parties. Most candidates agree that it is important that the leaflet conveys the party's local priorities, 95% of women say that was very or quite important. Demonstrating competency for public office, previous political and community experience along with personal background are all important for over 80% of candidates. A very high percentage of candidates, 83% enjoyed campaigning; many paper candidates had actively helped the party campaign in more winnable seats. An overwhelming majority, 90% said they would be prepared to stand again which benefits the parties. However, the willingness of most of these respondents to be serial candidates restricts opportunities for other people to experience nomination and campaigning. During the interviews a number of councillors who have recruited candidates say that the parties do their best with limited resources to recruit candidates. However because each party requires only one candidate for each seat, there is no incentive to continue the search if a candidate volunteers year after year.

5.9 Modernisation of councils

Candidates were asked if there should be more efforts to attract a greater diversity of people to serve as councillors. In principle, many support increased diversity in elected members. More than seven in ten would like to

see more young people, almost two thirds believed there should be more councillors from ethnic minority backgrounds and more than half said there should be more women.

Women are more enthusiastic supporters than men of initiatives to broaden the social base of councillors. A significantly higher proportion of women “strongly agreed” that more women, young people and those from ethnic minority backgrounds should be recruited. Over two-thirds of women and just under half of men “agree” that there should be more women councillors but women are more than twice as likely as men to “agree strongly” that there should be more women councillors. Overall, there is less difference between the proportions of men and women who “agree” that there should be more young councillors and ethnic minority councillors. Nearly four in ten women and three in ten men “agree strongly” that there should be more young councillors and more than a quarter of women and less than a fifth of men “agree strongly” that there should be more councillors with ethnic minority backgrounds, (see Table 5. 25).

Table 5.25 Candidate gender by opinion about modernisation initiatives

		gender			
		Male		Female	
More women as councillors	Strongly Agree	123	16.0%	139	36.2%
	Agree	255	33.2%	121	31.5%
	Neutral	317	41.3%	115	29.9%
	Disagree	53	6.9%	8	2.1%
	Strongly Disagree	19	2.5%	1	.3%
More young people as councillors	Strongly Agree	188	24.7%	140	36.6%
	Agree	354	46.5%	154	40.2%
	Neutral	171	22.5%	71	18.5%
	Disagree	39	5.1%	18	4.7%
	Strongly Disagree	9	1.2%	0	.0%
More councillors with ethnic minority backgrounds	Strongly Agree	127	16.6%	111	28.8%
	Agree	276	36.1%	125	32.5%
	Neutral	289	37.8%	128	33.2%
	Disagree	43	5.6%	13	3.4%
	Strongly Disagree	30	3.9%	8	2.1%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Overall, just over 60% of respondents agree that greater social diversity would improve the public image of councils, a core objective of modernisation. However, a significant higher proportion of women, over 80% of women compared with 58% of men think that greater social diversity would improve the image of local government. Less than half respondents agree that greater social diversity would improve voter turnout. A higher proportion of women than men agree that greater social diversity would increase voter turnout but the difference is not statistically significant; 41% women, and 36% men.

Table 5.26 Candidate gender by opinion about modernisation initiatives

		gender			
		Male		Female	
Greater social diversity would improve image	Strongly Agree	130	17.0%	115	30.2%
	Agree	313	40.9%	154	40.4%
	Neutral	202	26.4%	86	22.6%
	Disagree	91	11.9%	20	5.2%
	Strongly Disagree	30	3.9%	6	1.6%
Greater social diversity would increase voter turnout	Strongly Agree	74	9.6%	64	16.9%
	Agree	199	25.9%	91	24.1%
	Neutral	277	36.1%	149	39.4%
	Disagree	172	22.4%	62	16.4%
	Strongly Disagree	45	5.9%	12	3.2%
Different life experiences, distinct insights	Strongly Agree	123	16.1%	127	33.2%
	Agree	405	52.9%	199	52.0%
	Neutral	166	21.7%	46	12.0%
	Disagree	48	6.3%	11	2.9%
	Strongly Disagree	23	3.0%	0	.0%
Women councillors have different policy priorities	Strongly Agree	34	4.4%	52	13.6%
	Agree	169	22.1%	123	32.1%
	Neutral	309	40.3%	134	35.0%
	Disagree	205	26.8%	68	17.8%
	Strongly Disagree	49	6.4%	6	1.6%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Generally the modernisation agenda is approved but since most of our respondents say they would stand again, this reduces opportunities for new candidates to emerge. Some candidates standing in 2006 suggest ways to limit incumbents and allow new candidates to stand. Council service should be

limited to 10 years, three terms or a compulsory retirement age should be introduced nationally to increase the diversity of councillors. However this question was included in the 2008 Local Candidate Survey, (Rallings, Thrasher & Shears 2008) and only a minority of candidates agreed. This issue was also addressed by the councillors Commission and their report recommends a maximum of five consecutive terms but would like political parties to limit their members to four terms. The report acknowledges that some of the best councillors are older, long serving experienced ones. The concern is that some local authorities and local parties operate as an exclusive club and new entrants are discouraged, (DCLG 2007).

In Wales and Scotland some councils have tried to persuade older councillors to retire and make way for younger people. In October 2003 the Welsh Assembly allowed local councils to offer "golden goodbyes" to any councillor with more than sixteen years of service if he or she would stand down at the next election. Not all councils agreed with the proposal but some did pay councillors. The scheme caused disquiet in Wales with councils criticised for wasting taxpayer's money, in part because there was no provision to prevent someone standing again for a future local election. (BBC, 16/10/03)

In February 2007 before the Scottish local elections 434, (35%) of Scotland's councillors expressed interest in taking payments in return for not standing. A new voting system was introduced for Scottish local elections in May 2007 and political commentators say that many of these retiring councillors were unlikely to have been re-elected under the new proportional system. The cost of this initiative has been estimated at more than £7 million and acceptance of this payment did not prevent anyone from standing for Scottish Parliament

election, in May 2007 nor subsequently standing for election to Westminster or Holyrood. (The Scotsman 15/02/07)

5.10 Positive Action for Women

Although supportive of increased diversity in councils, survey respondents showed limited support for the positive action initiatives that have been tried in England to attract more women to stand. Candidates were asked “do you approve or disapprove of all-women shortlists, (AWS) and party quotas for women candidates?” Selection from AWS is approved by only 12% of candidates and party quotas for women by 26%. Women candidates are four times more likely to support all-women shortlists and nearly three times more likely to approve of party quotas than men. Even so, as Table 5.27 shows, the majority of women disapprove of AWS and disapprove or are neutral concerning party quotas.

Table 5.27 Candidate gender by opinion about AWS & Party quotas

		gender			
		Male		Female	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
All women shortlists	Strongly Approve	13	1.7%	27	7.2%
	Approve	54	7.1%	46	12.3%
	Neutral	87	11.5%	58	15.5%
	Disapprove	261	34.5%	146	39.0%
	Strongly Disapprove	342	45.2%	97	25.9%
Party quotas for women candidates	Strongly Approve	33	4.3%	45	11.8%
	Approve	134	17.5%	91	23.9%
	Neutral	121	15.8%	67	17.6%
	Disapprove	213	27.8%	96	25.2%
	Strongly Disapprove	265	34.6%	82	21.5%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Some candidates comment that positive action is actually sex discrimination; unfair and should be unlawful. A Conservative councillor comments,

"I truly believe that the quality and passion of the candidates is more important than all other things. I believe sex, race and background should be totally irrelevant... (and referring to AWS & quotas), any enforced methods may reduce quality, while encouraging crass discrimination"

Between 1993 and 1996 the Labour party had experimented with all-women shortlists but this policy was judged to be unlawful because it contravened the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. Subsequently the government introduced the Sex Discrimination (Election Candidates) Act in 2001. This legislation permits parties to adopt positive measures to reduce inequality in numbers of men and women candidates, so although the law has been amended, there is little support from current candidates. Two male Labour councillors from North England write:

"The local party, wrongly in my opinion designated certain wards where women had to be selected"

And

"Labour candidates should be selected on merit not gender"

As I would expect the highest support for positive action comes from Labour candidates; it has been party policy. The Labour party has a history of campaigning for group representation, although originally class based. The Conservative and Liberal parties have traditionally emphasised individual choice. Whereas other parties have spoken about the desirability of diversity, thus far the Labour party is the only party to implement positive action initiatives

in English local elections. At the time of the 2006 election for London's multi-member wards it was official Labour Party policy to include at least one woman candidate in each ward.

A London councillor writes,

"I believe more should be done to improve gender equality, instead of emphasising women's appointments, (positive discrimination). It should be a party rule that no delegation or committee should consist of more than two thirds of either gender"

Our respondents do not like all-women shortlists or party quotas but these positive action measures have proved effective in increasing the numbers of women elected in other countries. While many are uncomfortable with quotas for women they are more successful than mentoring, training or encouragement. There is international evidence to show that when one party introduces voluntary quotas other parties make more efforts to recruit more women, (Stephenson 2004).

Alternative suggestions for increasing the numbers of women councillors are amongst the Councillors Commission recommendations. The introduction of all-out elections in multi-member wards every four years for English local elections would be preferable to single member wards and partial elections, because;

"With multi-member wards there is an incentive for parties to maximise their appeal to voters by fielding a more diverse range of candidates: this increases the likelihood of people from under-represented groups being selected" (DCLG 2007)

Multi-member wards may also offer opportunities for councillors to share the case work and reduce the time spent on council duties which could make the position more attractive to women.

5.11 Candidate recruitment

On the whole, most candidates think that political parties have difficulty finding sufficient candidates. Recruiting candidates is linked to a fundamental problem with the public image of local government. There is a general lack of public knowledge about local government, is the almost unanimous opinion of nine in ten candidates.

As Table 5.28 shows men and women agree that this lack of knowledge is one possible reason for non-involvement.

Table 5.28 Candidate gender by opinion about possible reasons for non-involvement

		gender			
		Male		Female	
Most people are disinterested in local government	Strongly Agree	173	22.6%	91	23.8%
	Agree	393	51.4%	182	47.6%
	Neutral	106	13.9%	53	13.9%
	Disagree	87	11.4%	52	13.6%
	Strongly Disagree	6	.8%	4	1.0%
Intrusive media coverage of personal life may discourage some people from standing	Strongly Agree	80	10.5%	52	13.8%
	Agree	266	35.0%	122	32.4%
	Neutral	183	24.1%	109	28.9%
	Disagree	192	25.3%	83	22.0%
There is a general lack of public knowledge about local government	Strongly Disagree	39	5.1%	11	2.9%
	Strongly Agree	287	37.4%	166	43.2%
	Agree	411	53.5%	196	51.0%
	Neutral	46	6.0%	16	4.2%
	Disagree	18	2.3%	5	1.3%
	Strongly Disagree	6	.8%	1	.3%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

A very high percentage, 87% think that local authorities should provide more public information about the work of councillors. Whilst men are more likely to back the political parties' traditional role in candidate recruitment, women would prefer more intervention from local authorities. Many candidates in Devon mentioned the public dislike of political parties' "interference" and "influence" in local government and therefore recruitment drives by local authorities may be more acceptable. (Shears 2004). However, this is a difficult problem since almost three quarters say that most of the public are not interested in local government. In general, the poor public image of local government and indeed lack of knowledge about local government deters people from considering standing for election. A very high proportion feel that being a councillor is too time-consuming, almost eight in ten women agree that it could be a reason for non involvement, (See Table 5.29)

Table 5.29 Candidate gender by opinion about possible reasons for non-involvement

		gender			
		Male		Female	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Being a councillor is too time-consuming	Strongly Agree	204	26.7%	116	30.3%
	Agree	366	48.0%	187	48.8%
	Neutral	123	16.1%	46	12.0%
	Disagree	61	8.0%	31	8.1%
	Strongly Disagree	9	1.2%	3	.8%
	Total	763	100.0%	383	100.0%
Councillors don't have the power to make a difference	Strongly Agree	83	11.0%	29	7.7%
	Agree	223	29.5%	105	27.9%
	Neutral	131	17.3%	59	15.7%
	Disagree	276	36.5%	152	40.4%
	Strongly Disagree	44	5.8%	31	8.2%
Councillors are insufficiently paid	Strongly Agree	60	8.0%	42	11.2%
	Agree	177	23.5%	80	21.3%
	Neutral	256	34.0%	133	35.5%
	Disagree	196	26.1%	95	25.3%
	Strongly Disagree	63	8.4%	25	6.7%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Although our survey responses show broad agreement between men and women that being a councillor is too time-consuming, from the councillors interviewed we know that the time required deters women more than men, (see section 7.5.2). Women are more concerned about the time commitment than men even if they both work full-time and have family responsibilities. A speaker at a meeting of the Women's Local Government Society* said,

"I have been a councillor for many years, at parish, district and now county level; it is getting harder than ever to persuade women to stand for election these days. More women work, they need two incomes to run a family home even if they have young children and they still do most of the housework. It's unrealistic to expect women to take on extra responsibilities. Men leave work and are free to attend meetings, I've never heard a male colleague say he has to pick up the children or arrange childcare. Sadly, I know of capable women councillors who have stood down because of the work load, it should be a properly paid position and then we would get good younger women" (WLGS, Taunton 2007)

** The Women's Local Government Society held a series of regional meeting in the autumn of 2007 to commemorate the centenary of the passage of the Qualification of Women (County and Borough Councils) Act.*

5.12 Time Commitment for councillors

Respondents who had been councillors said they spent an average of 25 hours per week on council business. Even though there was little difference between the time men and women spent on council business; previous studies concluded that residents thought women councillors were more approachable. Becky Gill conducted a series of interviews with councillors in 2002 for the Fawcett Society and found

"Many of the women, particularly on councils where there were very few women, were contacted by women members of the public from other wards who wanted to discuss their issues with a woman. So the workload of the women councillors has increased, often with work of a more social work nature" (Gill 2002)

My survey evidence supports this view; residents are more likely to consult women councillors rather than men. Women councillors received more frequent letters, telephone calls and emails, i.e. "more than once a week". One female councillor from Surrey writes,

"I never hold ward surgeries but meeting residents is a daily occurrence at my home, their home, in the street and at meetings of different organisations, I receive telephone calls from residents daily"

On average, residents approach women councillors more frequently than they contact men, in particular by telephone calls, (see Table 5.30). Responses to the pro-active questions, concerning frequency of holding ward surgeries and circulating newsletters show no large differences between men and women.

Table 5.30 Councillor gender by frequency of council business

		gender			
		Male		Female	
Hold ward surgeries	More than once a week	9	3.2%	5	4.5%
	More than once a month	71	25.1%	28	25.2%
	About once a month	87	30.7%	28	25.2%
	Less than once a month	44	15.5%	18	16.2%
	Never	72	25.4%	32	28.8%
Circulate newsletters	More than once a week	3	1.1%	1	.9%
	More than once a month	13	4.6%	5	4.5%
	About once a month	49	17.5%	21	18.9%
	Less than once a month	195	69.6%	79	71.2%
	Never	20	7.1%	5	4.5%
Receive letters from residents	More than once a week	135	47.4%	57	50.4%
	More than once a month	93	32.6%	29	25.7%
	About once a month	29	10.2%	10	8.8%
	Less than once a month	22	7.7%	15	13.3%
	Never	6	2.1%	2	1.8%
Receive telephone calls from residents	More than once a week	185	64.7%	83	73.5%
	More than once a month	62	21.7%	23	20.4%
	About once a month	14	4.9%	5	4.4%
	Less than once a month	21	7.3%	1	.9%
	Never	4	1.4%	1	.9%
receive emails from residents	More than once a week	135	49.3%	57	52.3%
	More than once a month	66	24.1%	29	26.6%
	About once a month	23	8.4%	8	7.3%
	Less than once a month	14	5.1%	3	2.8%
	Never	36	13.1%	12	11.0%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Unfortunately the idea that women are more approachable than men can deter some women from becoming councillors. One female councillor interviewed felt strongly that people should be informed about the time commitment but knew of instances where party recruiters have been tempted to underestimate the time required in order to attract candidates, (see section 7.5.1)

5.13 Conclusions

Ten years ago the publication of the Government White Paper, "Modern Local Government: in touch with the People" 1998, highlighted that various aspects of "the old culture" of local government needed to change in order to improve democratic accountability. The White Paper recognised that "the current body of councillors is not representative of the population as a whole, fewer are drawn from ethnic minorities, many more are aged over 45 years and many fewer are women" There has been no improvement in the representativeness of councillors since 1998 and as yet this aspect of the modernisation programme has not been successful.

Previous studies have focussed on councillors and their motives for standing for election; this survey is different and includes all candidates. Very little is known about unelected candidates who form the majority of local election candidates. The 2006 Local Election Candidate Survey has redressed this deficiency and provides much information about the type of people who stand for local elections. The survey responses have identified the candidates' motives for standing and the similarities and differences between men and women. The social characteristics of respondents show that they are overwhelmingly white, middle-aged and well educated and this applies equally to men and women. Six in ten of the women respondents are over 50 years old.

Over half the women have or had professional occupations and I could expect this employment background to provide women with the confidence to stand. Previous political involvement is restricted to local elections for most of the respondents. However, the difference between men and women in previous political experience was noticeable. Men are more than twice as likely to have stood for Parliament, (10% of men and 4%) of women and a significantly higher proportion of men had held a party office, compared with women. Almost two thirds of respondents select wishing to support my party as a reason for standing. Being asked to stand is chosen by nearly 60% of candidates. A significantly higher proportion of women than men select being asked to stand as their first reason. Otherwise there are only small differences in the reasons selected by men and women to explain why they first stood. In order of importance for women is first to support my party, second being asked to stand and third wishing to improve the area for residents. Women are more willing than men to report that they received very positive encouragement from family, friends and party when thinking of standing. Almost a quarter of men say it was entirely their own decision to stand compared with less than 10% of women. Six in ten women stand as a consequence of being approached, once again providing further evidence to support the belief that women are more likely than men to lack the confidence to present themselves for election.

A third of candidates were prepared to stand as a paper candidate, a significantly higher proportion of women than men, four in ten, choose "prepared to stand as a paper candidate" as the explanation for successful selection. Although women are five times more likely than men to think "gender" contributes to selection; only 22% of women think it is relevant. Candidates were asked if there should be more effort to attract a greater

diversity of people to serve as councillors. Overall, women are more enthusiastic supporters than men of initiatives to improve the social base of councillors. A significantly higher proportion of women “strongly agreed” that more women, young people and those from ethnic minority backgrounds should be recruited. Women are twice as likely as men to strongly agree that there should be more women. When asked directly if they approve or disapprove of all-women shortlists, (AWS) and party quotas for women candidates. Women candidates are four times more likely to support all-women shortlists and nearly three times more likely to approve of party quotas than men. Even so, the majority of women disapproves of AWS and disapproves or is neutral concerning party quotas.

Most candidates think that political parties have difficulty finding sufficient candidates. Recruiting candidates is linked to a fundamental problem with the public image of local government. A very high proportion feel that being a councillor is too time-consuming, almost eight in ten women agree that it could be a reason for non involvement. Whilst men are more likely to back the political parties’ traditional role in candidate recruitment, women would like to see the local authorities providing more information about the council and the role of a councillor. The survey revealed some significant differences between the opinions of men and women candidates. The interviews with councillors and unelected candidates explore some of these topics and are reported in Chapter 7 and provide some explanations for the reluctance of women to stand for election.

This chapter has largely focused on simple bivariate relationships using gender as the main variable of interest. These relationships, whilst showing

some strong similarities between men and women also suggest that there are some important differences between men and women. To explore these further I should undertake a more sophisticated form of analysis. Chapter 6 therefore develops a series of loglinear models to test hypotheses about the significance or non significance of three variables simultaneously.

Chapter 6: Loglinear Modelling

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter the survey data analyses have explored responses using standard chi-square tests to discover if there is any statistical relationship between two categorical variables. The loglinear models in this chapter extend the analyses of contingency tables to include three categorical variables. Section 6.2 begins by introducing the six models; the variables included in each model and explains the loglinear method. At the beginning of the third section I describe the aim of this multivariate method and the process of step by step elimination that leads to each final model. The section continues with the detailed report of the loglinear backward elimination procedure for model 1. The following five sections outline each model and summarise the results.

6.2 The Loglinear Models

The bivariate analyses reported in chapter 5 indicate some important differences between men and women and this analysis seeks to develop upon those significant results with a series of six multivariate models. Each loglinear model includes two variables known to be associated from the bivariate analysis and introduces a third variable to test hypotheses about significance/non significance of particular multi-way associations/interactions. The six models (with prior reasoning below) are:

Model 1 examines the three-way contingency table, to test for mutual associations between the respondents' gender, level of agreement with the suggestion that greater diversity amongst councillors would improve the public image of local government and whether or not they have been councillors.

Model 2 tests whether men and women hold different opinions concerning the role of political parties as the main supply of candidates and if that opinion is modified by council experience.

Model 3 tests whether there is any significant relationship between the decision to stand for election and occupational status whilst controlling for gender.

Model 4 tests whether there is any significant relationship between the gender and occupation of respondents and whether they first stood as a candidate because they were asked to stand.

Model 5 tests whether there is any significant relationship between the gender of respondents, whether they agree with the statement "councillors don't have the power to make a difference" and the type of authority in which they stood in 2006.

Model 6 tests whether there is any significant relationship between the gender and party affiliation of respondents and whether or not they agree with the statement "In general, women councillors have different policy priorities than men".

Multivariate modelling is preferable to using a stand alone cross-tabulation and chi-square testing, because it allows consideration of the relationship between three categorical variables simultaneously. Loglinear modelling does not require a separation of variables into dependent and explanatory, rather it treats all variables alike as "response variables" whose mutual associations are explored, (Knoke & Burke 1980). The Poisson model is chosen because the total sample size is not fixed and the cells in the cross-classification table are independent. A hierarchical model will be used, which

assumes that in order for an effect of a certain order to be present, all effects of a lower order must also be present. The process begins with a saturated model where the three variables are included with all possible associations. In this case the three-way association; three, two-way interactions and three main effects are included. To refine the model, a backward elimination strategy is used. The backwards elimination process deletes, one by one the term which does not make a significant contribution to the model, starting from the saturated model.

This statistical method of categorical data analysis is used throughout this chapter. For the first model only, the backward elimination procedure will be demonstrated step by step. Subsequently the model results are simply summarised, (see appendix ii for SPSS output). Each loglinear model begins with a short section to locate the survey questions and chosen variables in the context of previous literature and research that sought to explain women's under-representation. Many of the previous studies concerned women elected to parliament; these questions are designed to address whether these issues are salient to local elections.

6.3 Model 1. Greater social diversity amongst councillors

Loglinear analysis is an extension of the two-way contingency table to include three categorical variables simultaneously. For instance the first model is to test for associations between gender, level of agreement with the suggestion that greater diversity amongst councillors would improve the public image of local government and whether or not they have been councillors. The bivariate analysis revealed significant differences between the opinions of men and women towards the benefits of greater diversity amongst councillors. Now I would like to test if this difference is modified by council experience for men and

women. The variable "preve" was chosen because this distinguishes between those respondents who had been councillors previously although they may not have been re-elected in 2006 and candidates who were not councillors before 2006.

Using loglinear modelling, I construct a model that looks at the combination of effects between the three variables. This involves fitting models to the observed frequencies in the cross-tabulation of these variables. The models represent a set of expected frequencies and the patterns of association are described by a set of odds.

I begin with the model's most complex relationship; GENDER, DIVERSITY AND PREVE (G, D & P) are related. This is the saturated model because it includes all possible one-way, two-way and the three way effects. The inclusion of the three-way interaction in the model is dependent upon the presence of all two-way associations and the main effects of the individual variables. In this example if the three-way interaction is present, (GDP) then this model must also include the two-way effects (GD, GP, DP) and the single variable effects (GDP).

The model selection procedure starts with this saturated model and then eliminates one by one the terms which do not make a significant difference to the model. The process of elimination stops when the model fits the data, according to chi-square criteria. Two types of chi-square statistic are computed in loglinear models; Pearson chi-square and the maximum likelihood ratio change chi-square statistic, (LR Chi-square).

At each step of the hierarchical elimination process, the effect with the largest significance level for the likelihood ratio change is deleted, providing the

level is larger than .050. In this model the three-way interaction is rejected because the LR Chisquare is .076 and the next step explores the two-way associations.

The first loglinear model concerns the respondents views on the benefits of greater diversity in councils. I know from the bivariate analysis that women are more likely than men to agree with this suggestion and this is probably because women see the present system as unappealing. Previous research by The Fawcett Society categorised the main problems facing women who may consider standing for parliament as the “four Cs” – culture, childcare, cash and confidence (Fawcett 2003). Their research showed that the culture of politics is a major disincentive to participation, many women voters perceived the UK style of politics as confrontational and unappealing, (see section 2.3). Women MPs surveyed after the 1997 general election complained about the culture of political life and said it was harder to be a woman than a man in parliament; almost two thirds of them disliked the “male public school attitudes” and “yob culture.”

Norris and Lovenduski conducted a survey of the candidates for the general election in 1992 that focused on the gender, class and race of parliamentary candidates and the recruitment practices of the main political parties. They identified three separate levels at which barriers or constraints to participation may operate: they are systemic, party political and individual supply and demand (Norris and Lovenduski 1995). In conclusion, British political institutions are characterised by a culture of traditional masculinity that is a major obstacle to women (Lovenduski 2005).

The first model tests for mutual associations between the respondents' gender, level of agreement with the suggestion that greater diversity amongst councillors would improve the public image of local government and whether or not they have been councillors. One of the aims of local government modernisation initiatives is to regain public trust and engage a greater cross-section of people, including more women with local decision-making.

One survey question was chosen to test whether there are differences between the responses of men and women towards modernisation initiatives to attract a greater cross-section of people to stand for election. The question is:

One of the aims of recent modernisation initiatives in local government is to attract a greater cross-section of people to serve as councillors. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

"Greater social diversity amongst councillors would improve the public image of local government"

Variable. "modern4" ("Greater social diversity amongst councillors would improve the public image of local government") from question 20 was chosen to test the null hypothesis:

H₀ the same proportion of men and women will agree that greater social diversity amongst councillors would improve the public image of local government

This analysis tests for any significant relationship between councillors, unelected candidates and their agreement with the statement "greater diversity amongst councillors would improve the image of local government" whilst controlling for gender.

The variables chosen were:

- Variable named “preve”: Prior to the 2006 election, had you ever been elected to metropolitan, district, unitary, London borough and /or county councils?

Coded, 0 = No and 1 = Yes.

- Variable named “modern4”: Greater social diversity amongst councillors would improve the public image of local government.

Coded: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral. 4 = Disagree and 5 = Strongly Disagree.

- And variable named “gender”: Are you Male or Female?

Coded: 1= Male and 2 = Female.

Tables 6.1, 6.2 & 6.3 show the frequencies for the individual variables in this model.

Table 6.1 Previously elected?

	was elected in LA previously ?	
	Count	%
No	784	67.7%
Yes	374	32.3%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Table 6.2 Social diversity would improve public image?

	Greater social diversity would improve image	
	Count	%
Strongly Agree	248	21.4%
Agree	472	40.7%
Neutral	294	25.3%
Disagree	111	9.6%
Strongly Disagree	36	3.1%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Table 6.3 Candidate gender

	gender	
	Count	%
Male	777	66.7%
Female	388	33.3%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Table 6.4 shows the three-way contingency table. This dataset has 777 male and 388 female respondents, therefore I would see a 2:1 ratio in observed frequencies if, on aggregate, men and women hold the same opinions. Actually the sharpest difference is that women who have not been councillors are twice as likely as the unelected men to strongly agree with this statement. Whereas one in seven men disagree/ strongly disagree that greater social diversity would improve the image of local government, very few women, almost one in sixteen, hold this view.

Table 6.4 Candidate gender and election success by agreement that social diversity would improve public image.

				gender		
				Male	Female	Total
				Count	Count	Count
Greater social diversity would improve image	Strongly Agree	was elected in LA	No	85	95	180
		previously ?	Yes	42	19	61
	Agree	was elected in LA	No	207	109	316
		previously ?	Yes	101	42	143
	Neutral	was elected in LA	No	121	48	169
		previously ?	Yes	77	35	112
	Disagree	was elected in LA	No	56	13	69
		previously ?	Yes	32	6	38
	Strongly Disagree	was elected in LA	No	19	3	22
		previously ?	Yes	11	3	14

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

The variable 'modern4' (Greater social diversity would improve image) was collapsed into a new variable 'diversity' by combining the 'Strongly Disagree' and the 'Disagree' categories to avoid the problem of sparsely populated cells, (only 3 previous councillors and 3 unelected candidates strongly disagreed with statement), which could make loglinear analysis unreliable. (see Table 6.4)

There were 1182 cases in the dataset; however there were 58 missing cases and so 1124 cases were accepted for this analysis.

6.3.1 Loglinear Modelling.

A number of hypotheses about deletion of effects will be tested.

To begin formulating the null hypotheses it is necessary to first formulate the saturated loglinear model. (See Equation 6a)

The notation in the equation means:

$\text{Log } m_{ijk}$ = is the log of the expected cell frequency of the cases for cell i, j and k in the contingency table.

λ = the effects which the variables have on the cell frequencies; e.g. λ_i

(DIVERSITY) = the main effect for the variable "diversity" and λ_{ij}

(DIVERSITY*PREVE) = the interaction effect for variables "diversity" and "preve"

$\lambda + \lambda_i$ (DIVERSITY) + λ_j (PREVE) + λ_k (GENDER) represent the observed cell frequency in these cells.

Equation 6a

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Log } m_{ijk} = & \lambda + \lambda_i \text{ (DIVERSITY)} + \lambda_j \text{ (PREVE)} + \lambda_k \text{ (GENDER)} + \\ & \lambda_{ij} \text{ (DIVERSITY*PREVE)} + \lambda_{ik} \text{ (DIVERSITY*GENDER)} + \lambda_{jk} \text{ (PREVE*GENDER)} \\ & + \lambda_{ijk} \text{ (DIVERSITY*PREVE*GENDER)} \end{aligned}$$

The first null hypothesis to be tested is,

H₀. All main effects and all two-way associations and three-way associations are zero

or in other words, that there is no three way association between the variables DIVERSITY, PREVE and GENDER.

To test deletion of effect hypotheses, the likelihood ratio chi-square statistic is used. The above H₀ is equivalent to the following: there is no significant change in chi-square if the effect is deleted.

The SPSS Loglinear Model Selection procedure provides information about the statistic's value and corresponding p-value ("significance"). As usual, I

reject a null hypothesis and consider the result as statistically significant if the corresponding p-value is less than a conventional 5% or 1%. Throughout this chapter, unless otherwise stated, we reject a null hypothesis and consider the result as statistically significant if the corresponding p-value is less than 0.05, i.e. 5% significance. If p-value is higher than a conventional 5%, the null hypothesis is accepted and the corresponding interaction can be left out of the model.

The model select procedure will be used to find the best loglinear model for the variables DIVERSITY, PREVE & GENDER

The null hypothesis can be expressed in three ways:

H₀: There is no 3-way interaction / association between the variables, DIVERSITY, PREVE & GENDER

Or:

$H_0: \lambda_{ijk} (\text{DIVERSITY} * \text{PREVE} * \text{GENDER}) = 0$

Or

H₀: the 3-way interaction term DIVERSITY PREVE* GENDER could be eliminated from the model and a general unsaturated model of main effects and 2-ways only are valid.*

Model 1 includes 3- way association, all 2- way associations and main effects.

H_0 : K-way and higher order effects do not differ from 0.

The results of the preliminary loglinear computation are shown in tables 6.5 and 6.6, this is an exploratory stage in the loglinear procedure to see if there is any association between these variables. If significant associations are found

then SPSS continues with the steps in the backward elimination procedure to find the best model to fit the data.

The column headings in the tables explained:

K-way refers to the effect of the variables, in Table 6.5

line 1 means:

DIVERSITY, PREVE & GENDER and (DIVERSITY*PREVE) +
(DIVERSITY*GENDER) + (PREVE*GENDER) + (DIVERSITY*PREVE*GENDER)

because the K-way refers to the three individual variables but the two-way and three-way higher order effects are included.

Therefore K-way in line 2 refers to the two-way and the three-way association.

Line 3, the K-way is only the three-way association because that is the highest order effect.

D.F. stands for the Degrees of Freedom in the contingency table. The degrees of freedom for any statistic is the number of scores that are free to vary in the calculation and this depends upon the size of the table.

Number of degrees of freedom calculation = (no. of rows -1) x (the no. of columns -1)

E.g. in a 2 x 2 table, (2-1) x (2-1)

1 x 1 = 1DF

LR Chisquare is the goodness of fit statistic used in loglinear modelling; it is very similar to the Pearson chisquare statistic.

Pearson Chisquare, the chisquare test works by calculating for each cell in the table an expected frequency that would occur by chance. The chisquare value is the calculated differences between the actual and expected values for

each cell and then summing those differences. The chisquare is interpreted only in relation to its associated level of significance.

In the results, $\chi^2 = \text{Chisquare}$ and a number in subscript refers to the degrees of freedom in the table, e.g. χ^2_3 .

Sig. stands for statistical significance, the conventional level of statistical significance is $p < 0.05$, which implies that there are fewer than five chances in 100 that you could have a sample that shows a relationship when there is not one in the population. A more rigorous level of statistical significance is $p < 0.01$, the probability that this result could have arisen by chance is 1 in 100.

Table 6.5 shows the results from the preliminary exploration of the model:

K-way 1: all main effects and two-way associations and the three-way association is significant.

K-way 2: two-way associations and three way association is significant

K-way 3: three-way association is **not significant**, ($p > 0.05$)

Table 6.5 Tests that K-way and higher order effects are zero.

K-way & higher order effects	D. F.	LR Chisquare	Sig	Pearson Chisquare	Sig
1	15	513.783	.000	541.196	.000
2	10	64.171	.000	67.526	.000
3	3	6.867	.076	6.794	.079

1. H_0 all main effects and all two-way associations and three-way association are 0

The null hypothesis is rejected because $p\text{-value} < 0.01$

2. H_0 all two-way associations and three-way association are 0

The null hypothesis is rejected because $p\text{-value} < 0.01$

but

3. H_0 three-way association is 0

The null hypothesis is accepted because $p\text{-value} > 0.01$

Table 6.6 shows the results from the second preliminary exploration of the model and this differs from Table 6.5 because each line shows the effects of the variables without the higher orders included. Therefore line 3 is identical in both tables.

The results in Table 6.6 show that:

- K-way 1: all main effects is significant.
- K-way 2: two-way associations is significant
- K-way 3: three way association is **not significant**

Table 6.6. Test that K-way effects are zero

K-way Effects	D. F.	LR Chisquare	Sig	Pearson Chisquare	Sig
1	5	449.612	.000	473.670	.000
2	7	57.304	.000	60.732	.000
3	3	6.867	.076	6.794	.079

1. H_0 all main effects are 0

The null hypothesis is rejected because $p\text{-value} < 0.01$

2. H_0 all two-way associations are 0

The null hypothesis is rejected because $p\text{-value} < 0.01$

But

3. H_0 all three way association is 0

The null hypothesis is accepted because $p\text{-value} > 0.01$

Regarding three-way interaction, SPSS reports $\chi^2_3 = 6.87$, $p = 0.08$.

Thus I conclude that there is no significant three-way association between DIVERSITY, PREVE and GENDER

H_0 : There is no significant change in L.R. Chi-square if deleted simple effect is, DIVERSITY*PREVE*GENDER

Table 6.7 The three-way association is tested

Step 0	Effects	Chi-square	df	Sig	Number of iterations
Generating Class	PREVE* GENDER* DIVERSITY*	.000	0	.	
Deleted Effect	PREVE* GENDER* DIVERSITY*	6.867	3	.076	4

Table 6.7 shows the results of hypothesis testing for the three-way interaction. The results confirm that, the data do not contradict H_0 : There is no significant change in L.R. Chi-square if deleted simple effect is, DIVERSITY*PREVE*GENDER

The null hypothesis should be accepted and the 3-way interaction can be deleted without compromising model's goodness of fit. In other words the 3-way interaction DIVERSITY*PREVE*GENDER will be eliminated for the next model. All 2-way and main effects remain in the model.

Null hypotheses for Step 1 of the backward elimination process,

1. H_0 : There is no significant change in L.R. Chi-square if deleted simple effect is,
PREVE*GENDER.
2. H_0 : There is no significant change in L.R. Chi-square if deleted effect is,

PREVE*DIVERSITY.

3. H_0 : There is no significant change in L.R. Chi-square if deleted simple effect is,

GENDER* DIVERSITY

Table 6.8 Step 1, Three 2-way interactions

Step 1	Effects	Chi-square	df	Sig	Number of iterations
Generating Class	PREVE*GENDER PREVE*DIVERSITY GENDER*DIVERSITY	6.867	3	.076	

Table 6.9 shows the results of hypothesis testing for the three two-way interactions.

1. H_0 : There is no significant change in L.R. Chi-square if deleted simple effect is,
PREVE*GENDER. The results confirm that, the data do not contradict H_0 , the null hypothesis should be accepted, PREVE*GENDER may be deleted without compromising the model's goodness of fit.
2. H_0 : There is no significant change in L.R. Chi-square if deleted simple effect is,
PREVE*DIVERSITY. H_0 should be rejected, PREVE*DIVERSITY may not be deleted.
3. H_0 : There is no significant change in L.R. Chi-square if deleted simple effect is,
GENDER* DIVERSITY. H_0 should be rejected, GENDER*DIVERSITY may not be deleted.

Table 6.9 Step 1, Three 2-way interactions

Step 1	Effects	Chi-square	df	Sig	Number of iterations
Generating Class	PREVE*GENDER PREVE*DIVERSITY GENDER*DIVERSITY	6.867	3	.076	
Deleted Effect 1	PREVE*GENDER	3.324	1	.068	2
2	PREVE*DIVERSITY	11.852	3	.008	2
3	GENDER*DIVERSITY	37.945	3	.000	12

Step 2 is to test whether the two remaining 2-way interactions may be deleted from the model.

1. H_0 : There is no significant change in L.R. Chi-square if deleted simple effect is,
PREVE*DIVERSITY
2. H_0 : There is no significant change in L.R. Chi-square if deleted simple effect is,
GENDER*DIVERSITY

Table 6.10 The two 2-way interactions

Step 2	Effects	Chi-square	df	Sig	Number of iterations
Generating Class	PREVE*DIVERSITY GENDER*DIVERSITY	10.191	4	.037	
Deleted Effect 1	PREVE*DIVERSITY	13.943	3	.003	2
2	GENDER*DIVERSITY	40.037	3	.000	2

Table 6.10 shows the results of hypothesis testing for the two remaining 2-way interactions.

1. H_0 : There is no significant change in L.R. Chi-square if deleted simple effect is,

PREVE*DIVERSITY. H_0 should be rejected, PREVE*DIVERSITY may not be deleted.

2. H_0 : There is no significant change in L.R. Chi-square if deleted simple effect is,

GENDER* DIVERSITY. H_0 should be rejected, GENDER*DIVERSITY may not be deleted.

Table 6.11 The final model.

Step 3	Effects	Chi-square	df	Sig	Number of iterations
Generating Class	PREVE*DIVERSITY GENDER*DIVERSITY	10.191	4	.037	

The final model after three steps of backward elimination shows that only two 2-way interactions remain in the best model.

The effects that were deleted as non-significant were the three way effect,

PREVE x GENDER x DIVERSITY, $\chi^2_3 = 6.87$, $p = 0.08$

and two-way, PREVE x GENDER association $\chi^2_1 = 3.32$, $p = 0.07$

All the other effects were found to be significant at the 5% level.

To test overall goodness-of-fit of the model, the likelihood ratio and Pearson chi-square statistics were employed which showed that there was no difference between the observed and expected counts and so the model was a good fit to the data

$\chi^2_4 = 10.19$, $p = 0.04$ and $\chi^2_4 = 9.99$ $p = 0.04$, correspondingly.

Goodness-of-Fit Tests

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Likelihood Ratio	10.191	4	.037
Pearson	9.986	4	.041

As it was only the three-way and one two-way interaction that were deleted the final equation for the model is as follows:

Equation 6b.

$$\text{Log } m_{ijk} = \lambda + \lambda_i(\text{DIVERSITY}) + \lambda_j(\text{PREVE}) + \lambda_k(\text{GENDER}) + \lambda_{ij}(\text{DIVERSITY} * \text{PREVE}) + \lambda_{ik}(\text{DIVERSITY} * \text{GENDER}).$$

This shows that there is a statistically significant two way association between 'PREVE', (whether a respondent has experience as a councillor) and 'DIVERSITY', (opinion about the benefits of diversity), i.e. councillors and non-councillors generally have different opinions about diversity. 'GENDER' does not modify this relationship. Similarly, there is a statistically significant two way association between the gender of respondents and opinion about the benefits of diversity, i.e. men and women generally hold different opinions about diversity, although being a councillor does not modify this relationship.

Finally, the model shows that gender of a respondent and being a councillor is conditionally independent. Given one's opinion about diversity, the proportion of women among councillors is the same as among non-councillors. There is no three-way interaction in this model so although women are more likely than men to support the idea that greater social diversity would improve the public image of councillors, council experience did not have a significant effect on this opinion. Councillors are less convinced of the benefits of diversity than non-councillors but this is not affected by gender.

6.4 *Model 2. Political parties should encourage more women to be candidates*

The second loglinear model is to test whether men and women hold different opinions concerning the role of political parties as the main supply of

candidates and if that opinion is modified by council experience. In England over 95% of all councillors are representatives of the three main political parties and local selection committees still favour active local party members. The Labour party prefers selection of candidates who have at least one year's membership but Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties are more flexible (Wheeler 2006). Therefore main parties fulfil the essential role of recruitment of and support for councillors. However, the supply of candidates is necessarily biased towards white, middle-aged males who are the majority of party members, (see section 2.3).

A survey question asked: Do you agree or disagree with the following general explanations of why there are relatively few women in politics?

And one statement is, Political parties should encourage more women to be candidates.

The variable 'women4' "Political parties should encourage more women to be candidates" from Q.22 was chosen to test the null hypothesis:

H₀. The same proportion of men and women will agree that political parties should encourage more women to be candidates.

This analysis tests for any significant relationship between councillors, unelected candidates and their agreement with the statement "Political parties should encourage more women to be candidates" whilst controlling for gender. Table 6.12 shows that both men and women agree that political parties should be attracting more women to stand for election. Women are almost twice as likely as men to strongly agree regardless of whether they have been elected or not. Only 3% of women thought political parties need not encourage more women.

Table 6.12 Candidate gender and election success by agreement that political parties should encourage more women to be candidates

				gender		
				Male	Female	Total
				Count	Count	Count
Political parties should encourage more women to be candidates	Strongly Agree	was elected in LA previously ?	No	93	86	179
			Yes	48	31	79
	Agree	was elected in LA previously ?	No	215	130	345
			Yes	123	45	168
	Neutral	was elected in LA previously ?	No	140	44	184
			Yes	63	25	88
	Disagree	was elected in LA previously ?	No	29	8	37
			Yes	20	2	22
	Strongly Disagree	was elected in LA previously ?	No	12	1	13
			Yes	10	2	12

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

The variable 'women4' was collapsed into a new variable 'partiesencouragewomen' by combining the 'Strongly Disagree' and the 'Disagree' categories to avoid the problem of sparsely populated cells.

There were 1182 cases in the dataset; however there were 55 missing cases and so 1127 cases were accepted for this analysis.

A number of hypotheses about deletion of effects will be tested.

First it is necessary to formulate the saturated loglinear model, see equation 4c

Equation 6c

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Log } m_{ijk} = & \lambda + \lambda_i (\text{PARTIESENCOURAGEWOMEN}) + \lambda_j (\text{PREVE}) + \lambda_k \\ & (\text{GENDER}) + \lambda_{ij} (\text{PARTIESENCOURAGEWOMEN} * \text{PREVE}) + \lambda_{ik} \\ & (\text{PARTIESENCOURAGEWOMEN} * \text{GENDER}) + \lambda_{jk} (\text{PREVE} * \text{GENDER}) \\ & + \lambda_{ijk} (\text{PARTIESENCOURAGEWOMEN} * \text{PREVE} * \text{GENDER}) \end{aligned}$$

The first null hypothesis to be tested is

H₀ all main effects and all two-way associations and three-way associations are 0.

or in other words, that there is no three way association between the variables PARTIESENCOURAGEWOMEN, (E) PREVE, (P) and GENDER, (G).

To test deletion of effect hypotheses, the likelihood ratio chi-square statistic is used. The above H₀ is equivalent to the following,

H₀: there is no significant change in chi-square if the effect is deleted.

Regarding three-way interaction, SPSS reports $\chi^2_3 = 4.24$, $p = 0.24$. Thus I conclude that there is no significant three way association between E, P & G

There were three steps needed to find the best model. The effects that were deleted as non-significant were the three way effect, $E \times P \times G$, $\chi^2_3 = 4.24$, $p = 0.24$ and two-way, $P \times E$, association $\chi^2_3 = 1.72$, $p = 0.63$. All the other effects were found significant at the 5% level

To test overall goodness-of-fit of the model, the likelihood ratio and Pearson chi-square statistics were employed which showed that there was no difference between the observed and expected counts and so the model was a good fit to the data,

$\chi^2_6 = 5.95$, $p = 0.43$ and $\chi^2_6 = 6.07$ $p = 0.42$, correspondingly.

As it was only the three-way and one two-way interaction that were deleted the final equation for the model is as follows:

Equation 6d

$$\text{Log } m_{ijk} = \lambda + \lambda_i(E) + \lambda_j(P) + \lambda_k(G) +$$

$$\lambda_{jk}(P*G) + \lambda_{ik}(E*G)$$

The final equation for the model shows that there is a statistically significant two way association between 'PREVE', whether a respondent has experience as a councillor and 'GENDER' i.e. there are different proportions of men and women as councillors but respondent's opinions about parties encouraging women does not modify this relationship.

So the only statistically significant two-way association between respondents' agreement or disagreement with the statement "Political parties should encourage more women to be candidates" is with the gender of respondents, i.e. men and women generally have different opinions about party encouragement, women are more likely to agree strongly that parties should do more to encourage women to be candidates. However, the three-way interaction was not found so council experience did not influence this opinion.

Finally, the model shows that being a councillor and agreement that parties should encourage more women is conditionally independent. So for women the level of agreement or disagreement about party encouragement is proportionally the same for councillors and non councillors. The political parties supply most candidates so therefore it is not surprising that women councillors and non councillors should expect them to recruit more women to stand.

6.5 Model 3 The initial decision to stand for election

The third model relates to individual motivation and opportunity and addresses gender differences in the initial decision to stand for selection. Evidence shows that professional and managerial experience provides opportunities to gain skills and confidence that help when standing for election. Research findings from Women's Social Attitudes, (1999) reported that women

of all ages were more likely than men to say that they found politics difficult to understand.

“Nearly three-quarters of women, (72 per cent) agree that they sometimes find politics so complicated that they can’t really understand what is happening, compared with just over one half of men, (54 per cent) (Jarvis 1999 :15).

This confidence in their ability to understand politics partially explains why men are more likely to put themselves forward for election, (see section 2.4). This finding was substantiated by the respondents to a survey of candidates standing for local elections in Devon in 2003. A greater proportion of men said it was their personal decision to first stand. Women were more likely to mention that someone else influenced or encouraged them to be a candidate. There were no discernible differences between men and women in their motives for standing, supporting the party and improving the area for residents was equally important for men and women. However, a greater proportion of women than men stated that they were persuaded by others to stand and had greater support once they became a candidate. By contrast, men were more likely to be self-motivated and less concerned with positive support from others when standing, (Shears 2004).

Survey question 4 asked:

Thinking about your experience of standing for the first time, was the initial decision to put yourself forward for selection?

(please tick one) A, entirely your own, B, consequence of being approached or encouraged by others or C, mixture of personal decision assisted by supporters?

The variable “decide” (the initial decision to put yourself forward for selection) was chosen to test the null hypothesis:

H_0 , The same proportion of men and women will report that it was entirely their own decision to stand for election.

This analysis seeks to discover whether there is any significant relationship between the decision to stand for election and occupational status whilst controlling for gender.

Table 6.13 shows that most women, six in ten, stood as a consequence of being approached and less than one in ten said it was entirely their own decision to stand. Men are more than twice as likely as women to put themselves forward. The majority of respondents stand as a consequence of being approached or knowing they have personal support for their first candidacy.

Table 6.13 Candidate gender by initial decision to put yourself forward for selection.

		gender			
		Male		Female	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Initial decision to put yourself forward for selection	Entirely your own	183	24.0%	37	9.7%
	Consequence of being approached	313	41.0%	227	59.7%
	Mixture of personal & supporters	268	35.1%	116	30.5%

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

Table 6.14 shows the three-way contingency table.

Table 6.14 Candidate gender and occupational status by decision to put oneself forward for selection.

				gender		
				Male	Female	Total
				Count	Count	Count
Initial decision to put yourself forward for selection	Entirely your own	Current or previous occupational status	Professional occupation	99	20	119
			Managerial/technical occupation	55	8	63
			Skilled occupation, non manual	8	7	15
			Skilled occupation, manual	9	1	10
			Partly skilled occupation	4	1	5
			Unskilled occupation	3	0	3
	Consequence of being approached	Current or previous occupational status	Professional occupation	150	115	265
			Managerial/technical occupation	92	49	141
			Skilled occupation, non manual	20	33	53
			Skilled occupation, manual	25	6	31
			Partly skilled occupation	14	7	21
			Unskilled occupation	6	4	10
	Mixture of personal & supporters	Current or previous occupational status	Professional occupation	118	60	178
			Managerial/technical occupation	86	25	111
			Skilled occupation, non manual	19	15	34
			Skilled occupation, manual	20	1	21
			Partly skilled occupation	11	4	15
			Unskilled occupation	5	6	11

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

The variable "status" was collapsed into a new variable "status2" by combining the 'manual skilled', "partly skilled" and the 'unskilled' occupational categories to avoid the problem of sparsely populated cells. There were 1182 cases in the dataset; however there were 76 missing cases and so for this analysis 1106 cases were accepted.

A number of hypotheses about deletion of effects will be tested. First it is necessary to formulate the saturated loglinear model, see equation 6e.

Equation 6e

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Log } m_{ijk} = & \lambda + \lambda_i (\text{DECIDE}) + \lambda_j (\text{GENDER}) + \lambda_k (\text{STATUS2}) + \lambda_{ij} \\ & (\text{DECIDE} * \text{GENDER}) + \lambda_{ik} (\text{DECIDE} * \text{STATUS2}) + \lambda_{jk} (\text{GENDER} * \text{STATUS2}) \\ & + \lambda_{ijk} (\text{DECIDE} * \text{GENDER} * \text{STATUS2}) \end{aligned}$$

The first null hypothesis to be tested is

H₀ all main effects and all two-way associations and three-way associations are 0.

or in other words, that there is no three way association between the variables DECIDE, (D), GENDER, (G) and STATUS2 (S).

To test deletion of effect hypotheses, the likelihood ratio chi-square statistic is used. The above H₀ is equivalent to the following,

H₀: there is no significant change in chi-square if the effect is deleted.

Regarding three-way interaction, SPSS reports $\chi^2_6 = 2.77$, $p = 0.84$. Thus I conclude that there is no significant three way association between D, G & S.

There were three steps needed to find the best model. The effects that were deleted as non-significant were the three way effect, D x G x S, $\chi^2_6 = 2.77$, $p = 0.84$ and two-way, D x S, association $\chi^2_6 = 5.93$, $p = 0.43$. All the other effects were found significant at the 5% level.

To test overall goodness-of-fit of the model, the likelihood ratio and Pearson chi-square statistics were employed which showed that there was no difference between the observed and expected counts and so the model was a good fit to the data, $\chi^2_{12} = 8.69$, $p = 0.73$ and $\chi^2_{12} = 8.39$, $p = 0.75$, correspondingly.

As it was only the three-way and one two-way interaction that were deleted the final equation for the model is as follows:

Equation 6f

$$\text{Log } m_{ijk} = \lambda + \lambda_i(D) + \lambda_j(G) + \lambda_k(S) + \\ \lambda_{ij}(D*G) + \lambda_{ik}(G*S)$$

The final equation for the model shows that there is a statistically significant two-way association between respondents' gender and occupational status, i.e. in general, men and women differ in their occupational status.

However, the only statistically significant two way association between 'DECIDE', (whether their decision to stand for election was entirely their own or influenced by others) is with 'GENDER'. There was no three-way interaction so the respondents' occupational status does not influence the initial decision to put themselves forward for selection. i.e. men and women generally differ concerning whether their decision to stand for election was entirely their own or influenced by others but their occupational status does not modify this relationship. This finding is consistent with previous research, regardless of occupational status women are more likely to stand for election when approached, very few, less than one in ten said it was entirely their own decision to stand. Finally, the model shows that one's occupational status and whether the decision to stand for election was entirely their own or influenced by others is conditionally independent.

6.6 Model 4 Candidates were asked to stand

The fourth model is to test for significant differences in candidates who were asked to stand and occupation whilst controlling for gender. The Citizen Political Ambition Study conducted in USA in 2003, (Fox & Lawless 2004) found "that at the aggregate level, women even in the top tier of professional accomplishment are less likely than their male counterparts to consider running

for political office", (see section 2.8). Despite having similar socioeconomic status, professional standing and as much interest in politics as men, women reported lower levels of political ambition and were significantly less likely to emerge as candidates. Women also are less likely to think of themselves as being sufficiently qualified to run for office, men were almost twice as likely as women to rate themselves as "very qualified" to run. This study concluded that the gender gap in political ambition amongst this sample of "eligible" candidates most probably endured in USA for two fundamental recruitment disparities. Women were less likely to be approached by leaders of political groups and receive encouragement to stand for election and on average women did not believe they were qualified to run for office.

This analysis seeks to discover whether there is any significant relationship between the gender and occupation of respondents and whether they said they first stood as a candidate because they were asked to stand.

Survey question 2 asked: Why did you first stand as a candidate in a local election?

Candidates were asked to select three reasons from the list.

The variable "standb" (I was asked to stand) from survey question 2 was chosen to test the null hypothesis:

H₀, The same proportion of men and women first stood as candidates because they were asked to stand.

The three-way contingency table 6.15 shows that amongst the candidates who selected being "asked to stand" as their first reason there is a very small gender difference in the proportion of full-time workers who were recruited. There are more women amongst the part-time employees, voluntary

workers and the retired. This reflects national working profile of women rather than party recruitment policy. The main difference is that 45% of men compared with 35% of women did not choose being asked to stand. Therefore almost two-thirds of women selected this as one of their reasons, although most respondents said political parties should encourage more women it seems from the responses to this question that many women will stand if asked. The responses to another survey question reinforce the conclusion that any increase in the numbers of women standing is more likely to be achieved through party recruitment than women putting themselves forward for selection.

Table 6.15 Candidate gender and occupation by reasons for standing the first time

				gender		
				Male	Female	Total
				Count	Count	Count
Reasons for standing first time: asked to stand	no	Which of these best describes your current occupation.	In full-time paid employment	157	40	197
			In part-time paid employment	22	26	48
			Self employed	58	19	77
			In voluntary occupation	13	4	17
			Registered unemployed	8	2	10
			Full- time student	3	2	5
			Retired	72	29	101
			Looking after home/ children...	4	10	14
	asked to stand, first reason	Which of these best describes your current occupation.	In full-time paid employment	57	26	83
			In part-time paid employment	12	23	35
			Self employed	32	17	49
			In voluntary occupation	2	4	6
			Registered unemployed	5	1	6
			Full- time student	3	0	3
			Retired	55	32	87
			Looking after home/ children...	0	4	4
	asked to stand, second reason	Which of these best describes your current occupation.	In full-time paid employment	72	27	99
			In part-time paid employment	14	15	29
			Self employed	21	7	28
			In voluntary occupation	1	3	4
			Registered unemployed	2	0	2
			Full- time student	4	3	7
			Retired	50	23	73
			Looking after home/ children...	0	10	10
	asked to stand, third reason	Which of these best describes your current occupation.	In full-time paid employment	45	11	56
			In part-time paid employment	2	14	16
			Self employed	14	8	22
			In voluntary occupation	2	2	4
			Registered unemployed	4	2	6
			Full- time student	1	1	2
			Retired	24	10	34
			Looking after home/ children...	1	2	3

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

The variable "standb" was recoded as "askedstand" with only two categories:

0 = not selected and 1 = selected as a reason for standing.

The variable, "occup" was also recoded into three categories, to reduce the contingency table and avoid under populated cells. The new categories are: full-time employed, part-time employed and other occupation, including retired. The new variable is named "working". The crosstabulation with gender showed that there were only slight differences between the proportion of men and women who were self-employed, in voluntary occupations, registered unemployed, students, retired and looking after homes/ family. Therefore these six categories may be merged into one, reducing the contingency table, avoiding sparsely populated cells but retaining the significant gender distinction in the data.

There were 1182 cases in the dataset; however there were 47 missing cases and so 1135 cases were accepted for this analysis.

A number of hypotheses about deletion of effects will be tested.

First it is necessary to formulate the saturated loglinear model, see equation 6g

Equation 6g

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Log } m_{ijk} = & \lambda + \lambda_i (\text{GENDER}) + \lambda_j (\text{ASKEDSTAND}) + \lambda_k (\text{WORKING}) + \\ & \lambda_{ij} (\text{GENDER} * \text{ASKEDSTAND}) + \lambda_{ik} (\text{GENDER} * \text{WORKING}) + \lambda_{jk} \\ & (\text{ASKEDSTAND} * \text{WORKING}) + \lambda_{ijk} (\text{GENDER} * \text{ASKEDSTAND} * \text{WORKING}) \end{aligned}$$

The first null hypothesis to be tested is

H₀ all main effects and all two-way associations and three-way associations are 0.

or in other words, that there is no three way association between the variables GENDER, (G) ASKEDSTAND, (A) and WORKING, (W)

To test deletion of effect hypotheses, the likelihood ratio chi-square statistic is used. The above H_0 is equivalent to the following,

H_0 : there is no significant change in chi-square if the effect is deleted.

Regarding three-way interaction, SPSS reports $\chi^2_2 = 0.07$, $p = 0.97$. Thus I conclude that there is no significant three way association between G, A & W

There were three steps needed to find the best model. The effects that were deleted as non-significant were the three way effect, $G \times A \times W$ $\chi^2_2 = 0.07$, $p = 0.97$ and two-way, $A \times W$, association $\chi^2_2 = 3.25$, $p = 0.20$. All the other effects were found significant at the 5% level.

To test overall goodness-of-fit of the model, the likelihood ratio and Pearson chi-square statistics were employed which showed that there was no difference between the observed and expected counts and so the model was a good fit to the data,

$\chi^2_4 = 3.31$, $p = 0.51$ and $\chi^2_4 = 3.32$ $p = 0.51$, correspondingly.

As it was only the three-way and one two-way interaction that were deleted the final equation for the model is as follows:

Equation 6h

$$\text{Log } m_{ijk} = \lambda + \lambda_i(G) + \lambda_j(A) + \lambda_k(W) + \lambda_{ij}(G \cdot A) + \lambda_{ik}(G \cdot W)$$

The final equation for the model shows that there is a statistically significant two way association between 'GENDER' and "WORKING" i.e. men and women in general differ in their occupations but whether the respondents selected being asked to stand for election does not modify this relationship.

So the only statistically significant two-way association between respondents' reporting whether they said they first stood as a candidate because they were asked to stand is with "GENDER" i.e. in general, men and women report differently in response to this question. There was no three-way interaction with occupation. The model shows that occupation of respondents and whether they said they first stood as a candidate because they were asked to stand is conditionally independent.

6.7 Model 5. Councillors do not have the power to make a difference

The fifth model considers whether men and women differ in their opinion of councillors' efficacy and if the type of authority where they stand contributes to this opinion. Research by the Local Government Association concluded that, "successive measures which have constrained and misdirected responsibilities away from local government seems to have had a dramatic impact on how local government is perceived in the eyes of the local community" (LGA 2000) Councillors who have been interviewed by Fawcett, (see section 2.10), believed that many people believed that the powers of local government had been reduced to such an extent that councils were unable to make significant changes to their locality and therefore it was not worth voting in local elections. (Gill 2000). The LGA maintains that the reasons for low turnout are complex and associated with party competition, salience of local issues, attitude of the local media and age and class of the electorate. Overall, the public's lack of

faith in the efficacy of local councils is the major obstacle for improving both voter turnout and numbers of candidates. Therefore the reform of local government needs to acknowledge the public perception of councillors who are constrained by national government and do not have any real power.

This analysis seeks to discover whether there is any significant relationship between the gender of respondents, whether they agree with the statement "councillors don't have the power to make a difference" and the type of authority in which they stood in 2006.

A survey question asked: Almost all adults are eligible to become local councillors, yet relatively few come forward to be candidates. Do you agree or disagree with these possible reasons for the non-involvement of most citizens? And one option was, Councillors don't have the power to make a difference

The variable "noninvb" (Councillors don't have the power to make a difference) was chosen to test the null hypothesis:

H₀, The same proportion of men and women will agree that councillors don't have the power to make a difference.

The three-way contingency table 6.16 shows large gender differences in opinions concerning whether councillors lack the power to make a difference. This also varies according to the type of local authority. In general, both men and women who stood for district councils hold the same views. Women candidates from London boroughs, unitary and metropolitan authorities are more likely than men to think that councillors do have the necessary powers.

Table 6.16 Candidate gender and authority type by agreement that councillors don't have the power to make a difference.

				gender		
				Male	Female	Total
				Count	Count	Count
Councillors don't have the power to make a difference	Strongly Agree	1a2	Metropolitan	14	2	16
			District	34	18	52
			Unitary	3	1	4
			London Borough	32	6	38
	Agree	1a2	Metropolitan	32	16	48
			District	99	51	150
			Unitary	28	6	34
			London Borough	62	29	91
	Neutral	1a2	Metropolitan	22	4	26
			District	56	26	82
			Unitary	17	4	21
			London Borough	35	25	60
	Disagree	1a2	Metropolitan	51	21	72
			District	107	64	171
			Unitary	26	7	33
			London Borough	92	60	152
	Strongly Disagree	1a2	Metropolitan	8	6	14
			District	21	11	32
			Unitary	0	2	2
			London Borough	15	12	27

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

The variable "noninvb" was recoded as "makedifference" with only three categories:

1 = Strongly agree/ agree, 2 = Neutral and 3 =Disagree /strongly disagree

There were 1182 cases in the dataset; however there were 57 missing cases and so 1125 cases were accepted for this analysis.

A number of hypotheses about deletion of effects will be tested.

First it is necessary to formulate the saturated loglinear model, see equation 6i

Equation 6i

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Log } m_{ijk} = & \lambda + \lambda_i (\text{GENDER}) + \lambda_j (\text{LA2}) + \lambda_k (\text{MAKEDIFFERENCE}) + \\ & \lambda_{ij}(\text{GENDER*LA2}) + \lambda_{ik}(\text{GENDER*MAKEDIFFERENCE}) + \lambda_{jk} \\ & (\text{LA2*MAKEDIFFERENCE}) + \lambda_{ijk} (\text{GENDER*LA2*MAKEDIFFERENCE}) \end{aligned}$$

The first null hypothesis to be tested is:

H₀ all main effects and all two-way associations and three-way associations are 0.

or in other words, that there is no three way association between the variables GENDER, (G) LA2, (L) and MAKEDIFFERENCE (M)

To test deletion of effect hypotheses, the likelihood ratio chi-square statistic is used. The above H₀ is equivalent to the following,

H₀: there is no significant change in chi-square if the effect is deleted.

Regarding three-way interaction, SPSS reports $\chi^2_6 = 6.34$, $p = 0.39$. Thus I conclude that there is no significant three way association between G, L & M

There were four steps needed to find the best model. The effects that were deleted as non-significant were the three way effect, $G \times L \times M$, $\chi^2_6 = 6.34$, $p = 0.39$ and two-way, $L \times M$. $\chi^2_6 = 8.58$, $p = 0.20$ and the other two way association $G \times M$, association $\chi^2_{12} = 14.92$, $p = 0.25$. All the other effects were found significant at the 5% level.

To test overall goodness-of-fit of the model, the likelihood ratio and Pearson chi-square statistics were employed which showed that there was no difference between the observed and expected counts and so the model was a good fit to the data, $\chi^2_{14} = 19.80$, $p = 0.14$ and $\chi^2_{14} = 18.99$, $p = 0.17$, correspondingly.

As it was the three-way and two of the two-way interactions that were deleted the final equation for the model is as follows:

Equation 6j

$$\text{Log } m_{ijk} = \lambda + \lambda_i(G) + \lambda_j(L) + \lambda_k(M) + \lambda_{ij}(G \cdot L)$$

The final equation for the model shows that there is only one statistically significant two way association between 'GENDER' and "LA2" but whether the respondent's opinion about whether or not councillors have the power to make a difference does not modify this relationship.

Although there were differences in the opinions of women and men concerning whether councillors have the power to make a difference, women are more inclined to feel they can make a difference, though this difference is not statistically significant. The type of authority in which they stood does not affect their opinions.

6.8 *Model 6. Women councillors have different policy priorities than men*

The final model concerns whether men and women agree that women councillors have different policy priorities than men, controlling for party affiliation. Since 1997 the increasing numbers of women elected to the national legislatures provided opportunities to examine whether women have made a difference by their presence in the context of UK party politics. The British Representation Survey, (BRS), conducted during the 2001 general election collected evidence from a representative sample of over 1000 candidates. In part, this survey examined whether women MPs behaved differently and had values that differed from men MPs, (see section 2.4). This study aimed to see if there were significant differences in the attitudes and priorities of men and

women standing for parliament. Whilst recognising the importance of party ideology and policy pledges as means to accountability in representative democracy. Phillips believes that women share common interests in equal opportunities or childcare provision that transcend party differences, (see section 2.2). She does not claim that women as a group will all have the same experiences; class, religion, ethnicity and ideology all contribute to attitudes and values.

This analysis seeks to discover whether there is any significant relationship between the gender and party affiliation of respondents and whether or not they agree with the statement "In general, women councillors have different policy priorities than men".

A survey question asked: One of the aims of recent modernisation initiatives in local government is to attract a greater cross-section of people to serve as councillors. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? In general, women councillors have different policy priorities than men.

The variable "modern7", "In general women councillors have different policy priorities than men" from survey question 20 was chosen to test the null hypothesis:

H₀, The same proportion of men and women will agree that in general women councillors have different policy priorities than men

Table 6.17 shows that women of all parties are more likely than men to agree that women councillors do have different policy priorities. Very few women strongly disagree with this statement.

Table 6.17 Candidate gender and party by agreement that women councillors have different policy priorities than men

				gender	
				Male	Female
				Count	Count
Women councillors have different policy priorities	Strongly Agree	Parties coded	Conservative	8	13
			Labour	13	10
			Lib dem	4	15
			Green	4	10
			UKIP	2	1
			BNP	1	0
			Independent	0	2
			Others	2	1
	Agree	Parties coded	Conservative	38	33
			Labour	54	22
			Lib dem	44	36
			Green	12	21
			UKIP	6	2
			BNP	4	1
			Independent	3	5
			Others	7	1
	Neutral	Parties coded	Conservative	93	41
			Labour	73	31
			Lib dem	88	35
			Green	20	19
			UKIP	12	0
			BNP	5	0
			Independent	10	2
			Others	7	4
	Disagree	Parties coded	Conservative	59	15
			Labour	64	26
			Lib dem	51	18
			Green	9	5
			UKIP	2	1
			BNP	3	0
			Independent	8	2
			Others	8	1
	Strongly Disagree	Parties coded	Conservative	19	2
			Labour	10	0
			Lib dem	11	3
			Green	1	0
			UKIP	4	0
			BNP	1	0
			Independent	3	0
			Others	0	0
	Total	Parties coded	Conservative	217	104
			Labour	214	89
			Lib dem	198	107
			Green	46	55
			UKIP	26	4
			BNP	14	1
			Independent	24	11
			Others	24	7

Source: Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

The variable "modern7" was recoded as "policy priorities" with only three categories: 1 = Strongly agree/ agree, 2 = Neutral and 3 =Disagree /strongly disagree

The variable, "party2" (parties coded) was originally coded into eight categories, (see table 6.17).

The new variable "mainparties" is recoded into five categories, 1 = Conservative, 2 = Labour, 3 = Liberal Democrat, 4 = Green and 5 = All other parties.

The previous categories of UKIP, BNP, Independents and "others" were merged to become "All other parties" in the new variable "mainparties". This dataset has relatively few respondents from these four categories so they can be merged into one, reducing the contingency table, avoiding sparsely populated cells but retaining the significant gender distinction in the data. Although the Green party is not conventionally called a main party, it remains as a separate category for this analysis since there was a significant gender difference in the proportion of respondents.

There were 1182 cases in the dataset; however there were 41 missing cases and so 1141 cases were accepted for this analysis.

A number of hypotheses about deletion of effects will be tested.

First it is necessary to formulate the saturated loglinear model, see equation 6k

Equation 6k

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Log } m_{ijk} = & \lambda + \lambda_i (\text{GENDER}) + \lambda_j (\text{MAINPARTIES}) + \lambda_k (\text{POLICYPRIORITIES}) + \\ & \lambda_{ij} (\text{GENDER} * \text{MAINPARTIES}) + \lambda_{ik} (\text{GENDER} * \text{POLICYPRIORITIES}) \\ & + \lambda_{jk} (\text{MAINPARTIES} * \text{POLICYPRIORITIES}) \\ & + \lambda_{ijk} (\text{GENDER} * \text{MAINPARTIES} * \text{POLICYPRIORITIES}) \end{aligned}$$

The first null hypothesis to be tested is:

H₀ all main effects and all two-way associations and three-way associations are 0.

or in other words, that there is no three way association between the variables

GENDER, (G)*MAINPARTIES (M)* POLICYPRIORITIES (P)

To test deletion of effect hypotheses, the likelihood ratio chi-square statistic is used. The above H₀ is equivalent to the following,

H₀: there is no significant change in chi-square if the effect is deleted.

Regarding three-way interaction, SPSS reports $\chi^2_8 = 10.36$, $p = 0.24$.

Thus I conclude that there is no significant three way association between G, M & P.

As such, there were three steps needed to find the best model. The effects that were deleted as non-significant were the three way effect, $G \times M \times P$ $\chi^2_8 = 10.36$, $p = 0.24$ and two-way, $M \times P$, association $\chi^2_8 = 15.26$, $p = 0.05$. All the other effects were found significant at the 5% level.

To test overall goodness-of-fit of the model, the likelihood ratio and Pearson chi-square statistics were employed which showed that there was no difference between the observed and expected counts and so the model was a good fit to the data,

$\chi^2_{16} = 25.62$, $p = 0.06$ and $\chi^2_{16} = 25.14$ $p = 0.07$, correspondingly.

As it was only the three-way and one two-way interaction that were deleted the final equation for the model is as follows:

Equation 6I

$$\text{Log } m_{ijk} = \lambda + \lambda_i(G) + \lambda_j(M) + \lambda_k(P) + \lambda_{ij}(G*M) + \lambda_{ik}(G*P)$$

The final equation for the model shows that there is a statistically significant two way association between 'GENDER' and "MAINPARTIES" but the respondents' opinion whether in general women have different policy priorities than men does not modify this relationship.

So the only statistically significant two-way association between respondents' opinion whether in general women have different policy priorities than men is with "GENDER" i.e. men and women in general, have different opinions about policy priorities and respondents' party political affiliation does not modify this relationship. There is no three-way interaction between gender, opinion about policy priorities and party. It seems that women believe they do have different priorities than men even though they stood to represent party priorities in their area. Finally, the model shows that the party affiliation and opinion whether in general women have different policy priorities than men is conditionally independent.

6.9 Conclusions

In summary, none of the loglinear models results in a significant 3-way association but each model results in one or more statistically significant 2-way associations between gender and another variable. Regardless of party affiliation, occupation or status, gender is the common variable that distinguishes the respondents' opinions. The first model showed the differences in the opinions of men and women with women more likely to agree that the public image of councils would be improved by increasing social diversity amongst councillors. Whilst women are more likely than men to support the idea that greater social diversity would improve the public image of councillors, council experience did not have a significant effect on this opinion.

In the second model the only statistically significant two-way association between respondents' agreement or disagreement with the statement "Political parties should encourage more women to be candidates" is with the gender of respondents, i.e. men and women generally have different opinions about party encouragement, women are more likely to agree strongly that parties should do more to encourage women to be candidates. Again council experience did not influence this opinion, the level of agreement or disagreement about party encouragement is proportionally the same for councillors and non councillors.

Model two showed that on average women agree that political parties should encourage more women to stand and this is linked with the third model that showed that many women say they stood as a consequence of being asked. There is a statistically significant two way association between whether their decision to stand for election was entirely their own or influenced by others and gender. The respondents' occupational status does not influence the initial decision to put themselves forward for selection; i.e. men and women generally differ concerning whether their decision to stand for election was entirely their own or influenced by others but their occupational status does not modify this relationship. Women are more likely to stand for election when approached, very few, less than one in ten said it was entirely their own decision to stand.

The third model looked at the respondents occupational status, (professional...) the fourth model concerns being asked to stand and gender but includes the variable current occupation, (full-time employed...). Once again, the only statistically significant two-way association between respondents' reporting whether they said they first stood as a candidate because they were asked to stand is with gender. There is a statistically significant two-way

association between gender and current occupation, i.e. in general, men and women report their current occupation differently; many women work part-time.

The fifth model showed that there were differences in the opinions of women and men concerning whether councillors have the power to make a difference. Women are more inclined to feel they can make a difference, although this difference is not statistically significant. The type of authority in which they stood does not affect their opinions. The final model showed that, in general women believe they have different policy priorities compared with men. So the only statistically significant two-way association between respondents' opinion whether in general women have different policy priorities than men is with gender. There is no three-way interaction between gender, opinion about policy priorities and political party affiliation. It seems that women believe they do have different priorities than men even though they stood to represent party priorities in their area.

Augmenting the quantitative data analysis the research project continues with a number of in-depth interviews with councillors, to obtain more individual information about motives for standing and experience as a councillor. The intention is that such 'life histories' should identify relevant factors that may explain the relative shortage of women candidates and councillors.

Chapter 7: Semi-structured interviews

7.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters presented the results from the quantitative data; chapter 4 examined aggregate data and showed the trends in the recruitment of women over a long period. It also identified considerable variation among local authorities in terms of both the number of women candidates and women councillors. I speculated there that differences might be related to the social context of an area with authorities characterised as relatively affluent and urban more likely to recruit women than others of a more working class base or sparsely populated. Chapters 5 and 6 considered individual level data and broadly found that the respondents are overwhelmingly white, middle-aged and well educated and this applies equally to men and women. Being asked to stand is chosen by nearly 60% of candidates. A significantly higher proportion of women than men select being asked to stand as their first reason. Women are more willing than men to report that they received very positive encouragement from family, friends and party when thinking of standing. Almost a quarter of men say it was entirely their own decision to stand compared with less than 10% of women. Six in ten women stand as a consequence of being approached. Overall, women are more enthusiastic supporters than men of initiatives to improve the social base of councillors. A significantly higher proportion of women "strongly agreed" that more women, young people and those from ethnic minority backgrounds should be recruited. Women are twice as likely as men to strongly agree that there should be more women. Most candidates think that political parties have difficulty finding sufficient candidates. Recruiting candidates is linked to a fundamental problem with the public image of local government. A very high

proportion feel that being a councillor is too time-consuming, almost eight in ten women agree that it could be a reason for non involvement. Whilst men are more likely to back the political parties' traditional role in candidate recruitment, women would like to see the local authorities providing more information about the council and the role of a councillor.

The quantitative survey data highlighted similarities and differences between men and women candidates and revealed new information concerning the motives of local election candidates. To discover more I now turn to more qualitative methods of empirical research. The quantitative data collection is supplemented by a number of individual qualitative semi-structured telephone interviews with councillors and unelected candidates to provide more information concerning personal circumstances and opportunities that contributed to their decision to stand for election and to continue in office.

"Qualitative methods is a generic term that refers to a range of techniques... which seek to understand the experiences and practices of key informants and to locate them firmly in context" (Devine 2002: 197). The intention is that such 'life histories' should identify relevant factors that may explain the relative shortage of women candidates and councillors. This research concerns election candidates as key informants and the research technique chosen is "elite interviewing" that is semi-structured interviews with respondents who are experts about the topic in hand, (Burnham et al 2004: 205).

The quantitative data collection of the national survey suggests that many women who stand for local election are asked to stand and many agree to support the party but only to be paper candidates. We could see from the aggregate election results in Chapter 4 that on many occasions the party with

the highest proportion of women candidates did not win most council seats. The survey respondents agree that there is a lack of public knowledge about local government, being a councillor is too time-consuming and too few women come forward to be candidates; all factors that accumulate to deter women from standing. These themes will be explored during the interviews to see if the experiences of these councillors and candidates can provide a better picture of candidate recruitment. In chapter 7 we turn to examine a third type of evidence, that drawn from interviews with candidates that contested local elections in the 2006-2008 period.

7.2 The sample

The survey respondents who were willing to be interviewed constitute the sampling frame. This is a non-random sample, purposely selecting paper candidates, new councillors and those who have served for many years. Although this is not a representative sample, interviewees were selected from sub-sets to include councillors in urban and rural councils, mostly those who represent the main political parties and a few from the smaller parties. Initially, I selected thirty candidates and sent emails to them outlining the interview schedule and asking if they were still prepared to be interviewed. The response was disappointing, some messages were returned, as undeliverable, three candidates wrote back saying I could telephone them but only one provided an appointed time. This procedure was repeated five times in order to speak to 14 candidates, approximately a one in ten success rate.

The first selection balanced type of authority and party candidates and then depending upon the responses the subsequent groups emailed were targeted towards achieving a representative sample. This involved waiting for

responses and then trying the numbers, sometime two or three times before success. The process took longer than I had expected, mainly because some people wrote back to say they were willing to be telephoned without specifying a time that was convenient. Fortunately, I had very friendly conversations with employees and the husbands and wives of councillors who provided good advice concerning better times to phone.

Three women and four men were interviewed and the fourteen consisted of:

- Eleven councillors and three unelected candidates
- Seven interviewees from district councils, one from a London borough and six from metropolitan authorities
- Political affiliation is four Conservatives, four Labour, two Liberal Democrats, one UKIP, one Independent one Green and one BNP

7.3 The Interview Schedule

The telephone interviews followed a pre-determined schedule that supplements the survey data. However the interview schedule is not rigidly followed, it is a list of topics that can be covered but also vary depending upon the respondent's answers. This method allows for the interviewee to introduce a topic that is relevant to them but may not have been included in the survey. For instance, questions in the survey are standardised and the candidate can agree or disagree with a limited list of options, so the survey reflects the researcher's priorities. In these qualitative interviews the focus of interest is what the interviewee has to say, is more flexible and should reflect the respondent's priorities. Bryman (2001: 313) suggests that in qualitative interviewing, "rambling" or going off at tangents is to be encouraged, it gives insight into what the interviewee sees as relevant and important. The intention in these

interviews is to broaden the topics covered in the questionnaire so that I may be able to gain a fuller picture of the people who stand and see if they can provide explanations for the shortage of candidates from under-represented groups. The possible reasons why people do not stand for election are multifaceted and interlinked. They range from the large structural barrier of the poor public perception of local government and politicians in general down to an individual's personal circumstances that restrict involvement. Of course, the people surveyed are election candidates and so the findings are applicable to that group and rather limited in explaining the non involvement of most people. The interview schedule is designed to address this limitation by asking about how under-representation should be tackled, what prevents people from standing and what could be done to make the councillor's position more attractive. Those who have been councillors are in the privileged position to comment upon the benefits and difficulties of the role and likely to be aware of the public perception of local government through contact with residents.

7.4 The Interview Themes

The questions are open-ended and explore the following themes. First is their own experience of being recruited to stand, any experience of recruiting others and what prevents people from standing. Second is the availability of information about the role of councillors prior to standing and whether this information for candidates should be provided by councils or political parties. Third is to ascertain how they think the under-representation of women, black and ethnic minority (BAME) and young councillors should be addressed? and whether it matters if the councillors are men or women, young or old? The fourth theme is to examine their ideas about how the role of being a councillor could be made more attractive to the public and whether this should be the

responsibility of local councils or political parties. Councillors are asked how they think councils could better support them in their role as democratic representatives. Lastly all interviewees were asked if there was any topic not covered that they would like to mention.

Although this is a small sample of our respondents the individual interpretations of the same questions is wide-ranging. The interview data captures a persuasive account of the advantages and disadvantages of being local councillor. As people talk about these themes they naturally take into account a number of issues simultaneously and provide a holistic picture to enhance the questionnaire responses.

It is widely accepted that councillors are unrepresentative of the population as a whole and that councils would benefit by having a wider range of ages, social backgrounds and experience than the current elected members. It is the government's intention to modernise councils and amongst the proposals are recommendations that councils should increase the numbers of women, young working people and councillors from ethnic minority groups, (see section 2.12). The three main political parties provide over 95% of all councillors (Wheeler 2006). Therefore, the recruitment practices by the political parties for local election candidates determine to a large extent the type of councillors we have. The fundamental questions are what type of people are selected and why did they agree to stand?

7.5. The interviewees' opinions

7.5.1 Candidate recruitment

The survey showed that almost eight in ten respondents were asked to stand or became interested in standing as a result of being approached, (see

section 5.6.2). This finding corresponds with the experience of most of the interviewees. Thirteen of those interviewed had either been party members before standing or community activists who were invited to join a party and stand for election. The influence of the political parties is clear from the responses to the first question:

“How did you first become interested in standing for election?”

What is apparent is this is not an impulsive decision; it is common practice to learn about the role of a councillor from party members who are councillors and spend time considering the commitment required. This is how a male Labour councillor describes his situation prior to standing for election in a metropolitan authority in 2007.

“I was approached by another councillor, I had been a community activist and I was a member of the Labour party. He was looking for someone politically interested in our community, someone who cared. He mentored me for a year”

He is 45 years old and self-employed now, before standing for election he had held a party office, served on a local public body and been involved with local community groups and pressure groups. His survey responses showed that his manager disapproved, (see section 2.16). Later in the interview he explained that fortunately he worked shifts and could attend meetings without asking for time away from work so he could disregard the negative attitude of the manager.

A male Conservative district councillor for over 30 years, aged 65, has been recruiting others for many years, his experience shows that:

“You talk to people, first off they say no, then it seems to grow on them they want more detail about commitment, they think about it. I find you must be honest. You don't say this won't inconvenience your personal life or you will only need to attend two meetings a week for

a short time. They want to know what will I achieve by doing this. I tell them that what you put in you will get out, it's how you want to play it, how much time you can commit"

Apart from recruiting amongst their party members, the interviewees acknowledge the value of approaching people who are known to be active in the community. An experienced Conservative councillor from London says:

"You have to get people outside of the party membership, party members are dwindling, go to residents associations, or other community groups.

These people are already doing good in society get them to join the party & stand"

A female district councillor in the South of England, aged 60, describes how she was recruited to the Conservative Party:

"I had been a town councillor and a high profile mayor for two years, when it came near to the end of my term as mayor I wanted to move on and let the town council and new mayor to get on with the job.

As a town councillor I did not affiliate with any party, I didn't want to be accused of siding with any party. It was known that I was not standing for town council again, I was approached by two parties asking me to be a district candidate and this seemed to be a logical step from the town council"

For a number of the interviewees standing for local election is an essential part of party membership. Almost two thirds of survey respondents say they first stood for election to support the party, (see section 5.6). A third of respondents were selected as paper candidates in 2006 but councillors are aware of the difficulties this may cause. A male councillor who has been a Conservative district councillor for over 30 years says the main parties:

"are desperate for candidates sometimes to fill the number of seats, they don't explain all that being a councillor entails. They need to look at themselves a bit more on this, my party has improved but at the local level the rush to get candidates is paramount. Then you can get drop-outs because they aren't prepared for the work involved, this is wrong"

And a middle-aged councillor from a metropolitan authority says that sometimes a party member will stand as a paper candidate and find themselves elected:

"The big parties are so desperate for candidates for every seat they snaffle up anyone, put up husbands and wives of councillors. Okay we are all guilty of this to some extent but the main parties are under such pressure centrally to get candidates, that is their priority. The wrong sort of person gets voted in almost by accident"

One of the interviewees is in this unexpected position; as a member of a minor party and has stood as a paper candidate for several years. In May 2008 he was elected, in the survey he rated his chance of election success as zero, he works full-time. He says he is enjoying being a councillor and helping people but it is very time-consuming dealing with the ward casework, he gets five or six phone calls a day.

On the whole party members are more likely to try to recruit others to join the party rather than ask people to stand for election. Those who do recruit candidates distinguish between the need for paper candidates and the responsibility of councillor recruitment.

A Liberal Democrat Candidate, aged 36 has stood as a paper candidate every year since he was 21 says there is no difficulty in getting candidates because the party does not expect to win these seats.

"Yes to support the party, year in and year we can get candidates, members are prepared to do what is necessary"

A Conservative who has been a district councillor for ten years says:

"Yes we are always looking for people, especially when we have an all-out election; I have taken people to council meetings. They should see how it works what is involved"

Although these interviewees have been able to find sufficient candidates almost three quarters of our survey respondents experienced no competition for the seat in 2006, (see section 5.7).

7.5.2 What prevents people from standing?

The next question was “what prevents people from standing in winnable seats?”

If the interviewee knew why people were prevented from standing the conversation continued with the additional question, “and do the reasons differ for women or younger people?”

Most frequently mentioned was time and money, time is an issue both in the timing of meetings and the time required to be a councillor. Over three quarters of the survey respondents agreed that being a councillor is too time-consuming, a third agree that councillors are insufficiently paid but interestingly almost the same proportion disagree with that statement. The overwhelming majority, 92%, agree that the general lack of public knowledge about local government is why most people do not stand for election.

A male Liberal Democrat district councillor aged 39, in North West England says:

“The time commitment and times of meetings, the district council always had day time meetings. We are changing this but it has been a long slow process, the culture of district councils is not moving fast enough, we need modernisation it’s hard to change”

He works full-time and would like to see more women, young people and BME councillors and he thinks councillors are insufficiently paid. A number of councillors would prefer evening meetings and feel this would be easier for working people. A Labour councillor from a metropolitan authority says the timing of meetings prevents many working people from standing. He mentions

some teachers he knows who would be good councillors but they cannot have time away from school in the day when we have our meetings:

"It would be taking on two jobs, too much time required. They couldn't get to daytime meetings. We should have some evening meetings and that would help working councillors a lot"

However, one female Labour councillor who is now retired disagreed that holding evening meetings would be better for everyone.

"Times of meetings, it's very hard to suit all. I worked in London but could make early evening meetings; women with children have difficulty with 6pm meetings. I don't have children but I know this time is for meals & bathing ..."

A male Labour city councillor aged 53, talks about the demands upon councillors and the need for a change of legislation:

"I have been a councillor for 20 years it has become a more and more demanding job it can be almost full-time. Legislation allows for time off work but it is too vague. It is down to the individual firm to negotiate with employee. Some firms will give time off but without pay, well people can't afford to lose money. Civil servants I know can take time off work but they lose money. Councillors have mortgages and families; loss of income is a disincentive to people.

I have been very lucky with my employer they have a corporate view of society, very responsible. A company ethos of supporting employees in whatever they do. Now Joe Bloggs the plumber's mate hasn't a chance of being a councillor. This must be addressed nationally, with a change to the legislation and employers willing to do it. Some small parish and town councils have short meetings in the evenings but a big authority like ours is a £1.8bn business. We need full-time councillors, not necessarily professional but it is time consuming"

He is now retired and spends 30 hours a week on council duties.

Amongst those who thought that men and women might have different reasons for not standing. A female councillor said she thought her professional experience equipped her well for putting herself forward and being a councillor:

"I was accustomed to speaking for work but not everyone has skill and confidence"

She thinks the political parties should do more to encourage and train women who may lack the skills that men are more likely to develop in the course of employment. Research by the Electoral Commission finds that women have a weaker sense of political efficacy and feel less confident than men that they can make a difference to political decisions, (Norris et al. 2004)

A female district Conservative councillor says the essential difference lies with the different attitude that men and women have to free time:

"It is easier to get men to stand because they have a different attitude to leisure time than women if you can call being a councillor a leisure activity!

Men have hobbies, a man will go fishing all day, and you wouldn't find a woman doing that she would say I'm too busy.

Men may not agree with me but they do make time for hobbies far more than women do"

The Electoral Commission's report gender and political participation agree with her opinion. They find that apart from a significant difference between the rates of participation by men and women in formal political activities, like party membership, party donations and campaigning "men are also generally more likely to be involved in civic-oriented activity, such as belonging to a voluntary association and being a member of a hobby consumer or professional group as well as a sports or social club" (Norris et al. 2004).

A Conservative councillor in a rural district for over thirty years has tried to interest younger party members:

"Principally, it is the time commitment and fitting this with work and family life. It is hard to get younger people, if they are on a career path, this can be a hard choice for them they have to judge for themselves"

Several councillors mention that the money paid to councillors is not enough to compensate for loss of earnings so if you want to attract younger

people there should be a better salary. A Conservative district councillor who was first elected when 38 years old says:

"The pay should be reasonable. Councils shouldn't be afraid to pay decent salary otherwise you will only get retired people. This is something that people don't talk about but if you work and have a family you should be paid"

One councillor from a metropolitan authority thinks that there is a fundamental problem about councillors that causes all parties to have trouble attracting younger people, BAME and more women to be candidates. People from these groups do not think of themselves as potential councillors:

"Unfortunately you have got to expect that it will be white old men, that is what people think about when they think of councillors. They assume that is what the council is. We must get this out of their minds and change the way it is"

A male Labour councillor aged 45 thinks that people do not connect with the council unless they see some councillors like themselves. The report of the Councillors Commission "Representing the Future" recognised that some authorities and local political parties have an exclusive and "club-like" atmosphere that is unwelcoming to others. (Councillors Commission 2007: 18)

7.5.3 What information would you have found useful before standing?

One of the Commission's recommendations is that local authorities should provide clear and accessible information about what councils and councillors do and raise interest in and provide information on how to stand as a candidate. Nearly nine in ten of our survey respondents agree that local authorities should provide more information about the work of councillors, although less than one in three would agree that local authorities should advertise for candidates. A large majority, 80%, of respondents feel it is the

responsibility of political parties to recruit candidates. This subject is the second theme of the interviews. The questions are, what additional information would you have found useful as a candidate or when deciding whether or not to stand? and would you have preferred to get this information from the council or your party?

A Conservative councillor in London for over twenty years says;

"More about requirement of role, the role has changed since I have been a councillor, explain duties, what are you likely to be involved with and time involved"

and his comments were echoed by others, especially the importance of being honest about the time commitment. A male councillor from the Midlands explains that it involves more than attending meetings:

"You must be told about the time commitment, this is not a part-time job, and you cannot switch off. You are there to help the people who voted for you they expect to contact you any time. The message should be you don't get into this for the sake of being a councillor you must be interested in the people of your town and the future"

However, a female Conservative councillor thinks that sometimes the political parties do not always inform people because:

"telling the truth about the time involved may be off-putting. I was told it would be 10 hours a week that's not true, not realistic, for example I spent this morning at a "quick" planning meeting from 9.15 to 1.15, and then I went onto a meeting at the tourist board. This is not unusual"

Two councillors observe that information is provided after you stand; however, less attention is paid to providing this type of information to interest people in standing.

One council gave booklets to all candidates after nomination and councils hold induction days, member development and training programmes for councillors.

A male Labour councillor first elected to a metropolitan council in 2007 knows that some authorities do provide information for candidates before nomination and his council held a public meeting and invited all those who were interested in standing.

When asked whether this information should be provided by the council or the party the consensus view is that both have a part to play.

A Conservative councillor who was first elected in 1975 says:

"Combination of both, the individual council is best to inform you about local area. The information provided has improved since I have been a councillor.

The parties are also responsible"

He agreed strongly that local authorities should provide more public information about the work of councillors but disagreed that the authorities should advertise for candidates.

A Labour councillor first elected in 1985 comments:

"The Labour party do offer levels of discussion about being a councillor up to more formal structure of training. This comes from the party nationally. I think you need a mixture of both, party members do have support but it has a party bias. Independents don't get that, equally the big parties need to understand the local element and the council can do that"

The importance of understanding the "local element" was mentioned by several interviewees and they thought the information should be provided by both the council and the local party. Speaking to councillors and attending council meetings is also a good method of finding out about the commitment.

7.5.4 How could issues of under-representation be addressed?

When talking about issues of under-representation and how this should be addressed most interviewees referred to their local population and what would be appropriate for their own council. The most concern was expressed about the lack of young people as elected members and some wished to see more women councillors. The views about BAME councillors depended upon whether there were significant numbers of residents from ethnic minorities in their area. The majority of survey respondents support the desirability of more councillors from these groups and their priority corresponds with the interviewees. More than seven in ten surveyed think there should be more young people and more than half, 54%, more women and BAME councillors.

The survey responses establish the unpopularity of positive action to redress under-representation. Almost three quarters disapproved of all women shortlists and nearly six in ten disapproved of party quotas for women candidates. The three main parties have spoken about the need for greater diversity amongst councillors but so far only the Labour party has used quotas for women. For local elections in multi-member wards at least one of the Labour candidates must be a woman. Given that the majority of survey respondents had disapproved of positive action I thought it might lead to a more constructive discussion if the interview included an opportunity for councillors to suggest their ideas for improving the diversity of councillors.

Nevertheless, two interviewees spoke about their experience of positive action from different viewpoints.

A Labour councillor from a metropolitan authority is unhappy with this practice because it prevented him from standing in the ward where he lives, in the interview he says:

"I couldn't stand in the ward where I live because it was party policy to gender balance the candidates and they wanted a woman. Look, I understand about diversity and equalities but this is a failing. I believe everyone should have the chance to stand, and a person who lives here and cares about this area should be the councillor. So to say no to me because I'm male is wrong. As a party we may have "shot ourselves in the foot" on this one if you know what I mean"

A Conservative councillor from London was concerned about the lack of BAME councillors and took action:

"We deliberately set out to recruit more party members from the Gujarati community in our borough. When I was elected we had only one West Indian councillor clearly not representative of our borough. As leader of the Conservative Group I have deliberately sought members for the Indian subcontinent, it's not easy they are a very close knit community hard to break into and we must make everyone feel part of things here.

In 1998 we had unofficial policy of getting an ethnic minority candidate for every ward for some we found two.

But all our candidates are of suitable ability I don't agree with selection by skin colour"

The councillors and candidates interviewed think the reasons for non-involvement of many people are intertwined. The public's lack of knowledge about local government, a negative image of councillors, inconvenient meeting times and competing demands on free time all amount to an unattractive proposition. Nonetheless there were some suggestions for specifically informing young people, ethnic minority groups and women.

A male 64 year old metropolitan councillor says, it should be feasible to inform younger people during their secondary school education:

"Young people don't have the slightest idea about how local government works or how national government performs. This should be taught in secondary schools, they should get the message across to all young people. Most people haven't a clue about the council, they'll say it doesn't bother me but it should bother them...

I don't really have an answer. The young are certainly unrepresented look at the councillors, the average age of our council is 59, that is terrible and I think it's about the same for many councils. Nothing gets done around here for youngsters"

A male 48 year old Conservative councillor thinks that an effective way to interest younger people in political parties and the work of councillors is through social events:

"If your party has good social events you can get young people to come along to party functions, kids from universities. They are introduced to our members and councillors and some are interested in joining us. Apart from fund-raising this is an important part of a Political party"

Both of the ideas above would be effective methods of reaching young women and ethnic minority residents. One female Labour councillor would like to see positive reporting in the popular press specifically aimed at women and feels that women of all ages could be informed about council work through women's magazines. She thinks the public image of councillors deters women from thinking of standing and could be improved by better publicity about women's work in councils:

"More public information, must highlight attractive aspects of councils & success.

Good articles in popular magazines, "Good Housekeeping" "OK" or "Hello" read by many women. Again positive role models and mentoring"

Apart from better information for the public a number of interviewees think that individual councils could be more flexible and alter their meeting times to suit more people and those in employment particularly, a male Labour councillor first elected in 2007 thinks:

"I'm on the member development panel and we look for best practice in other authorities and I think the key thing here is to change the times of our meetings, they have always been daytime. Some should be in the evenings, so I questioned why do we always have to meet in the day? We could even have one in three meetings in the evening it would be better. It was discussed and we voted, the result was marginally in favour of remaining as before. This is probably because most of our councillors are old and they like it this way"

and he suggests that a better salary would also improve the diversity of councillors:

"It needs to be a full-time job, properly paid; we need councillors with a professional attitude, a can-do approach. People can't manage on the allowances, if you are not rich, retired or kept, man or woman you cannot do it and be effective... the stark reality is that an ordinary working person in this country doesn't have the opportunity to be a councillor"

The interview conversations reveal a sharp difference of opinion on this topic; two candidates are opposed to any moves to select candidates based on gender, ethnicity or age. They say that what matters is how well councillors do their job and not whether they are white and middle-aged. This is the opinion of a minority of interviewees and most of those interviewed appreciate there is a problem and would like the parties to encourage more people to stand for election. A Conservative councillor thinks it does matter who your councillors are because:

"Young people have new ideas and enthusiasm; older people have knowledge & experience. Men are more analytical and women sympathetic of course I generalise but you need them all"

A young female Labour candidate from the Midlands thinks it should be possible to have proportional representation based on the local population and would like local quotas to operate:

"There should be proportional representation on councils, seats for younger people, women and people who are ethnic minority. It could work, certain seats for these people depending on the area... It matters greatly; there are too many old retired people, too many men. There are nowhere near enough young people. There should be more women and definitely more ethnic minority councillors. Everyone has something to offer I know these councillors have been around a long time and know a lot but all views should be heard"

The ideal of "all views being heard" is mentioned by several councillors who express concern that councils dominated by white middle aged men cannot

understand what is wanted by younger people. Two councillors are aware of the particular difficulties of recruiting BAME women to stand. A Labour councillor lives close to an estate with many Asian residents, he is also a governor at a school where half the children are Asian and he has spoken to Asian women to see if he can interest them in being school governors or councillors:

"We have to engage and encourage and get out amongst our community. We must break down barriers on both sides, understand the culture. The Asian ladies have the hardest time, they cannot stand for election they say my Dad won't let me or my husband wouldn't allow that, it's impossible for them.

It does matter, a council should be as near as you can be representative of the community. It is important to get a cross-section of views if you can"

Another councillor speaks about cultural attitudes towards public office and whilst he has seen a change in the behaviour of Asian people he knows there is a strong feeling of separate spheres of home and public life. Nevertheless, he feels that the parties should do more to recruit BAME women candidates and they should be:

"Encouraged by the main parties, not many councils have proportional representation of people; we are especially short of BME women. This is certainly a big issue, I have a few Asian friends and they are enlightened, you know women are not kept indoors. There is still reluctance though to enter into public life this is cultural but our culture needs to change as well if we are to get more people"

The need for a change of culture within councils and parties is a strand of thought that recurs throughout the interviews and one Conservative London councillor thinks it affects many women:

"Politics is confrontational, women don't like to take this approach, and my wife was a councillor for 12 years she loved the ward work but hated committees. Of course, you will find some women who like the cut & thrust of debate and thrive on it but many find it tedious and a waste of time"

Two councillors comment that if women are elected they are good councillors because they have the time to do the job properly. A Conservative district councillor knows that for women it can be difficult to manage work, family responsibilities and find time to be a councillor. However he knows some women councillors, not in paid employment, who are full-time councillors and who have been very good:

"Well the women we have had on this council are better than men, especially in high positions. This may be because this is an affluent area and if your husband is earning more than £100,000 you don't need a second income"

A female Conservative councillor who is not working estimates that she spends 50 hours a week on council duties. Her survey responses show that like many councillors she receives letters, telephone calls and emails more than once a week she also contacts the local press and an MP regularly. She does think the time commitment deters many people from standing and says it can disrupt personal life:

"You are there to help your community that is your purpose and that is the reward it certainly is not financial.

My husband would say that people should not phone at all hours of day and night, they should not come to our house and knock on the door nor stop me in the supermarket when I'm doing my shopping"

7.5.5 What support could councils offer to councillors?

One of the recommendations from the Councillors Commission states that the role of a councillor must be compatible with full-time working and an executive councillor with part-time working. This is to ensure that as many people as possible can participate in local democracy. (Councillors Commission 2007: 58) Amongst their suggestions are changing meeting times and setting the maximum length of time for meetings so the time required is clearer. The

Commission also say the public should be aware of the pressures on councillors who also work and understand the limits of councillors' availability.

This topic was discussed further when the interviewees were asked how they think councils could better support them in their role as democratic representatives and what could be done to make the role of councillor more attractive. The improvements suggested by some councillors arise from personal experience with time consuming casework. They say help with secretarial or administrative tasks and rooms to use as ward surgeries would be most useful. One female Labour councillor says she receives telephone calls from residents who phone her because they have been unable to speak to council officials. She comments:

"We need better customer service, more dynamic & urgent responses, officers should have answers & reports in time for meetings. Councils don't operate efficiently; this wouldn't be acceptable in any other business.

We should have one phone number for the council and someone must promise to ring back, keep people informed of progress on their problem.

Even change the phone system, not have to ring many numbers, press buttons and hold or even try several times"

Other councillors are critical of the old-fashioned culture of local government and wish to see extensive modernisation of council procedures to embrace modern technology and adopt efficient business practices. Video-conferencing is mentioned instead of always travelling to attend meetings especially for county councils. The use of specialist software for tracking the progress of casework would be helpful. Underpinning these suggestions is the recognition that councillors and council officers are not making the best use of their time. Technological improvements could assist busy people to be more effective councillors and improve the public image of local government.

Improving the public perception of councils and councillors is an integral part of making the role of a councillor more attractive. The councillors regard this as an enormous challenge because it could involve extensive changes to our system. The ideas put forward include redressing the imbalance of power between central and local government, a change to the voting system and abolition of the cabinet system with executive and non-executive members.

A number of councillors think that local councillors should have more power. However, opinion about the survey statement, "councillors don't have the power to make a difference" is evenly divided with approximately 40% in agreement and the same percentage disagree. In the interviews councillors mention the undue influence of council officers and non-elected quangos in decision making. A young BNP candidate says all councillors should have:

"More power, they haven't got enough power, too much has been passed onto quangos. Decisions are also made by civil servants in the council. Unless you are part of the ruling group in our council that's Labour, you can't put policies through.

First past the post system is terrible, you get a nice little clique, it's like a club

If I had been elected I don't think I could have done much. I would be the only councillor from my party; I might have been able to find someone thinking like me. I could do the grassroots work in the ward but I wouldn't be able to influence the budget or anything major. I could have no input in important things"

7.5.6 What could make the role of a councillor more attractive?

There is divided opinion about the merits of the cabinet system, it allows some councillors to be backbenchers who are required to spend less time in the council and this could be attractive to working people. However, the non executive councillors are not in the position to influence the council decisions, so this is not likely to make the role more attractive. One Conservative district councillor for over thirty years says:

"The cabinet system did reduce down the time required by some councillors. Now you have two tiers of councillors... councillors I speak to around the country tell me that the new system can be good for some people but others are put off by being disenfranchised from decision making. It's a difficult path to tread because you want everyone to feel they are achieving something. After all that's why they are doing this, they are certainly not in it for the money"

Another male Conservative London councillor for twenty years disapproves of this system:

"Get rid of the cabinet system go back to traditional meetings system. The government changed the role of councillor; in reality non executive members have no say.

This is sad and serious, you have a half-way house some are full-time. Others not even part time and given a pittance for their time, very difficult to hold the executive to account. This is extremely regrettable the Chair of a Committee was always a key role but all members could vote, now the executive make decisions, nobody can do anything about it, I regret this change"

7.5.7 What could local authorities and political parties do to promote the role of councillors?

Councillors were asked what could local authorities do to promote the role of councillors and could the political parties do more to interest people in standing. One Conservative district councillor aged 65 thinks the problem is much greater than the shortage of candidates for local elections; it encompasses the public attitude to politicians:

"Nationally politicians at all levels are a big turn-off for most people and this includes councillors. The public perception is that they are in it for money or the ego-trip. The councillors I know are neither, but this idea puts people off, from the start.

It doesn't help that the national government blame local government and vice versa, this hurts both sides and worsens public opinion. What drove people on years ago was the status of councillors, I don't mean personal status. People regarded councillors well; they could see you worked hard for them. It was a regarded position; it used to be "good on them" for doing this...

You need to change this so that people will think the status of councillor is worthwhile. We want people to say, **I'd like to do that**"

During the interviews several other councillors refer to the changed status of councillors and how employers used to support and even be proud to have councillors in the company. Now they are more likely to see it as a disadvantage to the firm. Two interviewees talked about the practical difficulties of combining full-time work with being a councillor. A young Liberal Democrat district councillor speaks of his experience with two large national companies:

"Companies and employers should do more as well; I have worked for two different companies since I have been a councillor. I asked permission to stand from my first employer, that was ok. When I got elected I asked for time off for meetings, there was a company policy but nobody knew how it should be implemented. I told my current employer that I was a district councillor before I started working for them. The procedure in this company is the same as for jury service, you submit a form to request time off, for jury service this is a block of time. This is not feasible for council meetings I can't send in a form for every meeting. There is legislation but logistically this does not work"

and a young Labour candidate describes how the current system works but would like to see a national scheme whereby councillors could have "political leave" and employers could be compensated for their loss.

"I work for a Trade Union and I can have half a day off a month for council work but that's not enough. I'd need about two days a week to do the job properly. Give people paid time off work... keep your own job but be allowed secondment. As it is an elected position you can't give up your job but perhaps paid time away from work. Two days a week for the council and back to work for the other three"

Two Labour councillors think that the government and councils could do more. The government should introduce the information through schools and perhaps lower the voting age to 16 years. Councils themselves should explain the duties and responsibilities of councillors more clearly.

In general those interviewed think the political parties are successful at attracting candidates to contest the seats. However, to increase the diversity of councillors they should look beyond the party members and enlist some more

candidates who are actively in voluntary work in their communities. Although the interviews are not exclusively focused on the increased diversity of councillors much of the conversations centred on this theme and the observations of interviewees make a contribution towards explaining the shortage of women councillors. Some interviewees spoke about personal circumstances of employment and family commitments that mean that some women feel unable to be councillors. Others point to influential cultural and institutional factors beyond the situation of individuals that account for women's reluctance to stand for election. There is a fundamental belief that the practice of politics is confrontational and this style of decision making does not appeal to many women. Additionally the public know very little about the workings of local government and the stereotypical image of a councillor is a white middle-aged man, so some women do not think of themselves as suitable councillors. Traditional gender roles and separation of home and public spheres are mentioned by one interviewee when talking about the extra barriers that affect Asian women but gender socialisation is very probably an explanatory factor for the under-representation of all women. Given that we know that many women stand for election because they were asked to stand, more encouragement by the political parties is thought to be the best way to get more women to stand as candidates.

7.6 Conclusions

The aim of this third stage of data collection is to use the interview schedule as a guide for the conversations. One of the strengths of semi-structured interviews is flexibility and the conversations varied according to the interviewees' responses and experience. The topics covered are relevant to

local elections in all local authorities in England and yet we see how the local context of party competition affects personal experience.

Thirteen of the fourteen interviewees are party candidates, although this is a small sample, the importance of political parties' role in providing candidates is evident. One female Conservative councillor is the only person interviewed who had been a councillor prior to joining a political party. The main difference between men and women councillors is that the men had joined their parties and stood as candidates at a younger age than the women. The two women councillors had first stood as middle-aged candidates, although one Labour councillor talked about family history of party membership but only thought about standing when near retirement from her full-time employment.

It is a widely held opinion that the time commitment required to be a councillor prevents more people from standing. The two women councillors also speak about other possibilities that affect women more than men. The Labour councillor thinks that some women lack the confidence for public speaking and the Conservative councillor feels that women do not believe they have the time for voluntary activities as often as men do.

Overall, the councillors who were interviewed are concerned about the over-representation of middle-aged men in councils. Men and women agree that the parties should encourage more people to stand and councils should change meeting times to suit working people.

The extreme opinions are held by the male and female unelected candidates in response to the question about addressing the social representativeness of councils. The two young men candidates say gender, age and ethnicity are irrelevant and what matters is finding good councillors. The

young woman Labour candidate would like to see local quotas for council seats to reflect the local population. The majority of interviewees think it matters what kind of people you have as councillors and would prefer to see younger councillors and more women. The particular cultural barriers of family disapproval facing Asian women were mentioned by two councillors who say very few Asian women will stand for election. One councillor speaks about the advantage to a council of having married women councillors who do not have other employment. In a conversation that was reminiscent of an earlier age he speaks about the contribution made by philanthropic wealthy ladies who have time to devote to council work.

Among the councillors who have ideas about how their council could help them be better democratic representatives there is no difference between the priorities of men and women. The need for modernisation of IT systems and adoption of efficient business practices would be welcomed by all.

The interviews provide a more holistic picture of the complexity of candidate recruitment and retention than the survey alone could capture. In this important sense these data offer an extra dimension to the under-representation of women in local councils. The interview data encompass more details about how an individual's employment and family commitments affect their contribution as councillors. These personal stories are set in different contexts of local authority and party competition. When people talk about their own experiences they naturally include factors that they see as being relevant, for instance one councillor had two distinctly different answers to the question about candidate recruitment. He explained that the answers appeared contradictory but that is because the situation is dependent upon the electoral popularity of his party. The relative strength of this empirical method is that it

allows comprehensive explanations and does not restrict interviewees to a simple answer. In this way it complements the quantitative data and enriches the research.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

8.1 Introduction

In this concluding chapter I draw together the various strands that comprise the thesis as a whole. My starting aim was, in the light of existing theories that seek to provide explanations for the under-representation of women, to consider the representation of women in English local government, largely although not exclusively from the 1970s onwards. There is no doubt that this is an under-researched area with the potential for permitting fresh observations about the historical, contextual and personal circumstances that facilitate/militate women's representation. Accordingly, the second section re-states the background and rationale for the research and the research questions and aims.

The third section returns to the research literature, particularly the studies concerned with parliamentary candidates and the recruitment of candidates for local elections. This serves to clarify the relationship between these findings and those contained within this thesis. In the fourth section the principal research methods are described in order to re-emphasise the empirical evidence that underpins the findings contained herein. The following four sections bring together the main findings following analysis of aggregate and individual level data. Section five summarise the analyses of women candidates and councillors from aggregate local election data drawn from the London boroughs, metropolitan and district councils. In section six the main findings from the Local Election candidate survey are reported, individual-level data that permit consideration of the similarities and differences between men and women candidates. Section seven considers the results of the loglinear

analysis that tested six models developed to explain the under-representation of women while section eight reports the main findings from the semi-structured interviews. The chapter then continues with a section that brings together the findings from the multi-method approach and assesses the extent to which the principal research questions have been successfully addressed. The final section considers possible ideas for future research in the light of my empirical findings.

8.2 Background and Rationale

The research approached the broad question of women's under-representation in the UK by addressing the specific imbalance of elected representatives in English local government both over time and in the modern era. Most of the published research concerns women who stand for parliamentary election and so local government is a neglected aspect of women's political participation in the UK that this research remedies. However, women have been more successful in local than parliamentary elections; one in three councillors are women compared with less than one in five MPs. Surprising, therefore, that the elected institutions where women are most evident have been relatively neglected by the extant research literature.

One of the principal reasons for this omission has been the difficulty of obtaining reliable and comprehensive data. I reported on various government studies report that councillors are unrepresentative of the overall population, (Maud 1964, Bains 1972, Robinson 1986 and Widdecombe 1985). Welcome though these figures are there have been no surveys or interviews with local election candidates to discover why this imbalance persists. Using the Local

Elections Database I was able to report that in 1973 women comprised 16% of local election candidates. The following years brought a gradual increase in the proportion of women standing such that by the early 1990s the level had almost doubled. However, since then the rate of growth has stopped, suggesting hidden barriers to the progress of women in challenging for and winning local political office. Accordingly, one of the main research questions for this research lay in increasing the understanding of the dynamics of women's representation in local government. Why, after a period of almost continual growth has the rate of progress stopped? Is there variance in the level of women's candidates for different types of local authorities and even variance within types. If not that might imply the proportion of women contesting and winning council seats was conditional on national rather than local factors. If variance did exist then local, contextual factors, may be contributory factors.

Specifically, the research aimed to:

- Map the rise in women as candidates and councillors over a long time period.
- Contextualise that rise; to discover if the increase was homogenous or varied significantly between authorities and parties and whether it has fluctuated over time.
- To conduct a national survey of local election *candidates* (not solely councillors) following the 2006 elections, which would identify, *inter alia*, their motives for standing and establish whether there are any statistically significant differences between men and women candidates.

- To conduct in-depth interviews with a range of councillors and unelected candidates in order to understand better their experience of working in a local political environment and whether that environment may be regarded as supportive or act as some deterrent towards the political careers of men and women.

8. 3 *Research evidence*

The existing research literature revealed a considerable interest into likely reasons for the persisting gender gap amongst UK parliamentary candidates and MPs. Surveys of parliamentary candidates found that women think the culture of politics is confrontational and unappealing, (Fawcett 2003, EOC 2002). Women report bias towards male candidates in selection committees, (EOC 2002) and the parties must take some of the blame for continuing gender imbalance. Research that concentrated on resource issues found that women lacked the confidence, cash and childcare, all resources necessary for selection and election, (Fawcett 2003) and ultimately it is women themselves who do not present for selection. A combination of resource pressures and individual motivation of individuals limit the supply of women candidates while the attitudes of political parties (or at any rate their selectorates) limit opportunities for women, (Norris & Lovenduski 1995).

The few studies of party political recruitment for local elections found that the parties provide opportunities but also create barriers. Informal recruitment is common; councillors contact people like themselves which perpetuates the predominance of white middle-aged men candidates, (Meadowcroft 2001). Prejudices, formal and informal, conditions recruitment such that most councillors have above average income, high status occupation and higher education qualifications.

This literature informed the framing of my survey questions and interview schedule. Later, in this chapter, I return to these findings to compare and contrast them with my own conclusions drawn from the evidence gathered from analysing a combination of aggregate and individual-level data with the experience and attitudes of survey respondents and interviewees. Whereas the surveys of parliamentary candidates contribute towards a greater understanding of the under-representation of women in parliament, they may not be wholly relevant to the selection of local election candidates.

8.4 Research Design and Methods

The research design combined quantitative and qualitative methods to increase our understanding of the dynamics of women's representation in local government both over time and in the modern era. The quantitative methods comprised secondary analysis of aggregate local election results and a candidate survey. The qualitative method involved a series of semi-structured interviews with councillors and unelected candidates.

Utilising these methods I set out to answer a number of questions of direct relevance to the proportion of women elected to English local government:

- What proportion of women have been selected and elected in local elections?
- Why after a period of almost continual growth has the rate of increase stopped so that we see on average that only 30% of candidates are women?
- What motivates people to stand for local election?

- What are the opinions of these candidates on the government's modernisation initiatives designed to increase the proportion of women selected and elected?

After drawing together the evidence from the above what steps could be taken to redress the current under-representation of women as councillors?

The first method to address these questions is secondary analysis of election results, to map the proportion of women's participation in elections. The aggregate election results held by the LGC Elections Centre were examined to identify historical trends within parties and /or authorities over time. The local election results for this analysis are from the London boroughs, metropolitan boroughs and shire districts. These historical data were examined to detect and highlight any patterns in the proportion of women candidates and councillors over this period. These historical data showed in the aggregate whether there has been a steady increase in women candidates or whether the proportion surges and then stabilises over time, suggesting, perhaps, that exogenous forces largely explain trends in women's recruitment. These aggregate data presented unique opportunities to compare candidate recruitment among local political parties over many years, thereby permitting the research to identify any variability between parties.

The primary data collection comprised a quantitative national survey of candidates standing for election in 2006. Following this questionnaire, a number of semi-structured qualitative interviews took place with councillors and unelected candidates that had responded and indicated a willingness to be contacted further. This was the first nationwide survey of local election candidates in England.

The final phase of data collection and analysis consisted of individual qualitative semi-structured telephone interviews with councillors and unelected candidates. The aim was to obtain more information than could result from structured questions concerning personal circumstances and opportunities that contributed to a candidate's decision to stand for election and, where relevant, to continue in office. The interviews delved into the individual's experience of being recruited, of recruiting others and thoughts about what prevents people from standing. Did these candidates think the under-representation of women, black and ethnic minority (BAME) and young councillors should be addressed? Did it matter that councillors are white, middle aged men?

8.5 Women in English Local Government

Over fifty years before women were able to vote in parliamentary elections and stand for parliament they were holding elected office in the agencies and authorities that preceded local authorities. An integral part of this research lay in describing the extent to which women were recruited to stand for local council elections. Although there are accounts of women who stood for election in the last hundred years the records are incomplete. Election results that appeared in local newspapers frequently recorded only the surname and initial of all candidates and gave no indication of a candidate's sex. A valuable aspect of this research lay with the data holdings of the LGC Elections Centre, University of Plymouth. This holds a complete set of Birmingham city elections and by-elections from 1911-2000. Most importantly for this research, it includes the forenames of all candidates and therefore it was possible to chart the rise of women candidates, albeit for one city.

A more comprehensive description of the rise in the proportion of women candidates and councillors in the London boroughs is from 1964 and

metropolitan boroughs and shire districts since 1973. The differences in the trends of recruitment between the main parties during this period were noted. In particular is there any association between a high proportion of women candidates for a party and election success? Are women selected to contest winnable seats?

In the London boroughs there was a trend for the second or third placed party to have a greater proportion of women candidates than the ruling party, except in Camden where Labour have a high proportion of women candidates and win most seats. The shire districts show a similar pattern of women candidates, the winning party has a smaller proportion of women than its rivals. The noticeable difference between shire districts with higher proportions of women and those lower is the number of Independent candidates. The sparsely populated authorities have relatively few party candidates and this is associated with low numbers of women. The metropolitan boroughs attract few Independent or minor party candidates but they also showed the most successful party, Labour has lower proportions of women than the Conservatives or Liberal Democrats. The numbers of women standing for election vary between authority types and then individual councils within each type. This seems to be affected by many factors, some beyond the influence of political parties or individual circumstances.

In the London boroughs, shire districts and metropolitan boroughs a high proportion of women selected does not result with a similar proportion elected. I can see that many women stand for parties that are placed second or third in elections; we cannot know from the aggregate data why women stand for these seats. What motivates women to stand for election and why so many women

stand in these difficult-to-win seats are questions addressed in the survey and interviews.

8.6 The Local Election Candidate Survey 2006

The Local Election Candidate Survey 2006 was the first national survey of candidates (earlier studies had focussed only on councillors) standing for election. The survey facilitated identification of candidates' motives for standing and the similarities and differences between men and women. The candidates are overwhelmingly white, middle-aged and well educated – qualities that applied equally to men and women. Focussing upon the women that had responded to our survey we noted that six in ten are over 50 years old; over half have or had professional occupations, employment backgrounds that might provide women with the confidence to stand.

I found that a significantly higher proportion of women than men were asked to stand. Women are more willing than men to report that they received very positive encouragement from family, friends and party when thinking of standing. Almost a quarter of men say it was entirely their own decision to stand compared with less than 10% of women. Six in ten women stand as a consequence of being approached, once again providing further evidence to support the belief that women are more likely than men to lack the confidence to present themselves for election., a finding that echoes the conclusions of earlier studies, (Fawcett 2003, Fox & Lawless 2004).

On the other side of the coin, a significantly higher proportion of women than men, four in ten, agreed to stand as a paper candidate in order to assist their party in filling the ballot paper. Undoubtedly, women's willingness to stand

in unwinable seats is a partial explanation for the presence of high proportions of women candidates for second and third placed parties in an authority. As well as providing valuable information about the type women who stand for local elections, the survey also investigated their motives for standing and also their opinions about women's representation. A survey of parliamentary candidates in 2005 reveals some important similarities and differences between women who stand for parliament and the findings from the local candidates survey. Many women candidates are middle-aged but interestingly this is not confined to local elections; it appears that more than half the women respondents standing for parliament are also middle-aged, (BRS 2005). Likewise, women parliamentary candidates are more willing than men to report that they received very positive encouragement from family, friends and party when thinking of standing. Some differences between parliamentary and local candidates do emerge. Whereas only 15% of women candidates for local government receive very positive support from employers, women parliamentary candidates are twice as likely to report very positive support from employers. That is no doubt a reflection of the relative prestige attached to each elected position – a seat in parliament carries with a potential for power and influence whilst one in the council chamber is perceived as a drain on a firm's resource. Another major difference between these sets of women respondents is experience of candidate recruitment. A high percentage of women standing for local elections are asked to stand, more than 60 %. Relatively few women, 19%, parliamentary candidates report being asked to stand; Almost one in three women standing for local elections selected being asked to stand as the first reason for standing while the proportion for their counterparts that contest parliamentary seats is nearer one in seventeen. Recruiting candidates is linked

to a fundamental problem with the public image of local government. A very high proportion feel that being a councillor is too time-consuming, almost eight in ten women agree that it could be a reason for non involvement.

Overall, women are more enthusiastic supporters than men of initiatives to improve the social base of councillors. A significantly higher proportion of women "strongly agreed" that more women, young people and those from ethnic minority backgrounds should be recruited. Women are four times more likely to support all-women shortlists (AWS) and nearly three times more likely to approve of party quotas than men. Even so, the majority of women disapproves of AWS and disapproves or is neutral concerning party quotas. Positive action is not popular also with parliamentary candidates, the majority of women parliamentary candidates, almost six in ten disapprove of AWS.

8.7 The Final Results of Six Loglinear Models

These initial observations of the individual level data, whilst valuable, could not reveal some of the more complex reasons why women contested local elections and differences that might exist between them and men. The contingency tables and chi square tests used in the bivariate analyses had revealed some significant differences between the attitudes of men and women but it was decided to construct multivariate models to consider the relationship between three categorical variables simultaneously. This would facilitate the testing of hypotheses about significance/non significance of particular multi-way associations/interactions.

The first model showed that women are more likely than men to support the idea that greater social diversity would improve the public image of

councillors but councillors are less convinced than non-councillors. The second model showed that men and women generally have different opinions about party encouragement for women candidates: women are more likely to agree strongly that parties should do more to encourage women to be candidates. For women the level of agreement or disagreement about party encouragement is proportionally the same for councillors and non councillors.

The third model showed that men and women generally differ concerning whether their decision to stand for election was entirely their own or influenced by others but their occupational status does not modify this relationship. The fourth model showed that men and women differed in selecting "being asked to stand" as a reason for first candidacy but the respondent's occupation does not modify this relationship.

The fifth model showed there were differences in the opinions of women and men concerning whether councillors have the power to make a difference, women are more inclined to feel they can make a difference, though this difference is not statistically significant. The type of authority in which they stood does not affect their opinions. The sixth model showed that men and women in general, have different opinions about policy priorities and respondents' party political affiliation does not modify this relationship. It seems that women believe they do have different priorities than men even though they stood to represent party priorities in their area.

In summary, none of the loglinear models results in a statistically significant 3-way association but each model results in one or more statistically significant 2-way associations between gender and another variable. Regardless of party affiliation, occupation or status, gender is the common variable that distinguishes the respondents' opinions. There is it seems more

than just an imbalance between men and women in English local government. There are differences of opinion between men and women that cut across other potential differences, for example, party. This has enormous implications for how the issue of women's under-representation might be tackled in the future.

8.8 The interview evidence

Chapter 7 reported the final phase of data collection which comprised a number of qualitative semi-structured telephone interviews with individual councillors and unelected candidates. The telephone interviews followed a pre-determined schedule that supplements the survey data. Although the interviewees generally speak positively about political party recruitment and support received when standing, they also acknowledge that parties need to recruit beyond the membership to attract diverse candidates. Political parties and councils alike should provide more information about the work of councillors that might entice a wider catchment of candidates. The time commitment required to be an effective councillor is thought to deter people more than any other factor, changing meeting times would benefit working people. Councils should learn from modern business practices and new technology. The suggestions for tackling the unrepresentativeness of many councils included better public information, legislation to allow paid time away from work and support with casework. The poor public image of politicians and government affects the public perception of local government and women do not think of this as an attractive voluntary occupation. Councillors felt that it does matter who represents the public and more diversity within the council would encourage more people to take an interest in local government. Whilst some councillors believed that more diversity within the council is a good idea achieving that end

will be difficult. Some councillors stated that recruitment for local elections tends to stretch to finding someone to stand. A distinction was made between recruiting for winnable and unwinnable seats. If the seat is winnable they want to make sure the candidate knows what is involved and will support the party line. However, if it is not winnable any reasonable and willing person is considered. Overall the councillors felt that the current system encourages participation from retired or non-working people, especially white middle-aged men and this bias perpetuates because councillors recruit others like themselves.

8.9 Discussion of the findings

The data analyses from Chapters 5, 6 and 7 have been reported separately but one of the aims of this research design is to show how these methods complement each other. The findings address different aspects of the research questions and together provide a fuller explanation of the reasons for the under-representation of women than might be achieved by a single research method.

First, the secondary data analysis of aggregate election results held by the LGC Elections Centre was used to identify historical trends within parties and /or authorities over time. The election results from London boroughs, metropolitan boroughs and shire districts mapped the increase in women candidates. On average, across all types of authority, the proportion of women standing almost doubled, from 17% in 1973 to 30% in 2006. The rate of increase was rapid during the 1980s but there has been little difference since 1995. Although it became apparent that the increase in women candidates stalled at this time, by itself aggregate data analysis cannot provide an explanation for this plateau.

The proportion of women candidates continued to vary between types of authority and there are differences between the recruitment of women by the main parties. Overall, the Liberal Democrats select proportionally more women than do the Labour or Conservative parties. Women's electoral success is described and any association between a high proportion of women candidates for a party and election success are noted. The examination of the local election results allowed comparisons between parties and types of local authority. It is also possible to identify differences in the proportions of women selected and elected between individual councils. At this level the research was successful and achieved the proposed objectives. However it is limited to a description of women's recruitment, this is disappointing because I have no explanations for the observed trends. For instance I can see many women standing but not elected. Ultimately, I cannot know from this form of analysis whether the observed trends are caused by the main parties being reluctant to select more women in winnable seats (demand problem) or whether there is a shortage of women candidates who want to be councillors (supply explanation).

The aggregate data reveal that a high proportion of women selected does not equate to a high proportion elected. Many women stand for parties that are placed second or third in elections but what cannot be known from the aggregate data is why so many women stand in these seats.

The survey questions can go further in finding explanations and seek to discover why women stand for election and why women stand in these difficult-to-win seats. The preferred explanation is that a large proportion of women are reactive rather than proactive in seeking office and a large proportion's involvement is highly conditional – assisting a party provides the extent of their political career ambition. I found that a significantly higher proportion of women

than men choose being asked to stand as their first reason for initially standing as a candidate; six in ten women stand as a consequence of being approached. In order of importance for women the motives for standing is first to support party, second being asked to stand and third wishing to improve the area for residents. When asked about reasons for selection four in ten women choose being prepared to stand as a paper candidate as the reason for selection. This survey has revealed the high numbers of women who stand only to support the party. They have been selected for difficult-to-win seats but it would be wrong to assume that party selectors pick women for these seats. A more likely explanation is that women are prepared to volunteer to be a losing candidate but not a councillor. These responses show the willingness of women to stand because the party needs candidates and paper candidates in many cases. In 2006 less than a quarter of women standing rated their chance of election success as probable, measured by a high estimation of winning, (see section 5.8).

Councillors speak of the pressure upon local parties from the national parties to find sufficient candidates to contest all available seats. Interviewees are careful to distinguish between the relative ease of finding sufficient willing volunteers if the party is unlikely to win and the difficulties of responsibly selecting for winnable seats. It seems to be an expected part of party membership to be a candidate in local elections if required. Party recruiters find it is difficult to persuade young and working women to stand in winnable seats because of the time required to be a councillor. This may provide one explanation for the higher proportion of women candidates for parties that are second or third in elections. Local government's poor image, the burdensome

role of being a councillor and the low remuneration that councillors receive operate as major deterrents to women without spare time to provide freely.

The responses to the survey and comments by councillors interviewed suggest that the reasons why some women are reluctant to stand in winnable seats are complex and many factors interlink to affect women's likelihood of being attracted to local government. Nine in ten respondents agree that there is a general lack of public knowledge about local government. Councillors talk about the current negative status of councillors and how that discourages volunteers, particularly women who dislike the confrontational culture of politics. The stereotypical image of a councillor is a white middle-aged man and therefore many women do not consider themselves to be potential councillors. The picture that emerges from the interviews concerning candidate recruitment varies according to the likelihood of winning the election. It would be misleading to say that parties "demand" a particular type of candidate for a winnable seat. Why do they often select a middle aged man? On balance, the answer to that question probably lies with the limited "supply" of willing and available volunteers.

Where does the blame for this lie? Political parties could do more, they should encourage more women; 87% of women agree that the parties should encourage more women. However, a high proportion, three quarters, of women also agree that too few women come forward. Findings from the survey show that many women report very positive encouragement from family, friends and party before standing which further supports the theory that women are less confident than men to put themselves forward for selection. The survey respondents and interviewees agree that the time commitment for councillors is one explanation for the reluctance of women to stand for election; eight in ten

women agree that being a councillor is too time-consuming. Councillors say that women who work often have domestic responsibilities and cannot take on extra commitments, so they do not have the time to spare unless they are retired or not working. Two thirds of the respondents agree that women put their families before a political career, which is probably the reason why many women councillors are middle-aged.

But at the heart of this evidence lies a conundrum: people recognise the problem of under-representation of women in local government but are reluctant to become proactive in remedying it. Although respondents agreed that there should be more diversity amongst councillors they disapprove of positive action to achieve change. Selection from all-women shortlists is approved by only 12% of candidates and party quotas for women by 26%. Councillors interviewed have mixed opinions on this subject whilst most do not agree that candidates should be chosen on the basis of age, gender or race, they recognise the need for more representative councils. Only one of the interviewees is in favour of quotas, an unelected candidate would like to see a system of proportional representation whereby the council members reflected the community. She suggests it should be possible to reserve seats for young people, women and BAME residents, so all views would be heard. The consensus view is that people from the under-represented groups must be encouraged and councils should vary meeting times to accommodate those in employment. Employers could be more sympathetic and councils should offer higher allowances to compensate for loss of earnings. The overall conclusions point to many possible reasons for the under-representation of women and those councillors interviewed think it will be difficult to remedy this situation within the present system.

The individual-level evidence shows that the way to improve representativeness lies with radical change. Currently the system encourages the supply of retired or non working people because they have the free time to devote to public service. For most councillors this is a voluntary occupation, albeit time-consuming. Therefore it is reasonable to assume that the supply of candidates and the demand by parties could be more diverse if councillors were paid a reasonable wage. Elected representatives in local government in other European countries are salaried. In the Netherlands people can take "political leave" from their employment when elected and return to their work four years later if they lose the next election, are de-selected by their party or choose not to stand again.

The evidence I have found concludes me to believe that the best way to increase the descriptive representation of women nationally is through local recruitment initiatives because that is how the system works now. If local initiatives can be tried across many authorities in England and are successful then we might be able to say this has relevance to national government. Where national government involvement could be most helpful is with extra funding for political parties and councils to advertise for candidates and provide better publicity about the work of local councils.

The Councillors Commission made some interesting recommendations, such as electoral reform, (STV), multi- member wards and whole- council elections. These are all changes that might assist the election of under-represented groups but there is either a dearth of evidence or that which does exist might question the value of these proposals. Yet, we do not have those changes and we do not know if they will be implemented therefore I must try to

make suggestions that could improve the situation working with the system that we have.

In part, this has been an inductive research strategy, it has extended knowledge about local election candidates, an area not previously explored to this extent. I have always seen this project as “action” research but one survey was never going to be enough since it does not include all types of authorities. It is welcome, therefore, that subsequent to my initial research the Elections Centre at the University of Plymouth has continued surveying candidates for local election. Now that data are becoming available for the period 2006-2009 it will be possible to broaden this research inquiry and establish a stronger foundation for understanding the causes of women’s under-representation in English local government. Without this necessary evidence the most appropriate solutions will not be found.

There are positive reasons for believing that these research findings will impact upon the policy making process. Members of The Women’s Local Government Society, (WLGS) have signalled their interest in our research findings. They have no other source for information concerning a large number of candidates across the country. The WLGS are actively trying to increase the recruitment of women councillors. They have introduced a campaign called “find a friend”; all members are asked to try to encourage other women to stand for election. I was asked to speak at their AGM and delighted to hear that my research prompted this campaign by councillors and party members. Some councillors at the meeting said that they know very little about what happens around the country. In fact some knew little about other parties in their district and less about neighbouring districts. There are no reliable sources for

information about local candidate characteristics and attitudes. Now there are suggestions for candidate monitoring forms to be completed with nominations.

The WLGS initiative to get more women involved began in 2008 and for that reason it is impossible at their early stage to measure its impact. The local elections in 2009 were for Shire Counties and Unitary authorities and involved a relatively small number of candidates. In 2010 we will have whole-council elections in all London boroughs and district and metropolitan elections so could be able to have a better idea of progress. Establishing links with groups involved in lobbying for policy change that might impact upon the descriptive representation of women is vital. It is also vital to communicate research findings directly to other elements within the policy making process. Summary research findings stemming from this research were communicated to the Councillors Commission and more recently the Speakers Conference on women's representation. Evidence has also been supplied to the Equalities Unit attached to the Cabinet. There are plans to merge the 2006 data file with subsequent surveys conducted 2007-2009. Those later surveys used questions that were first used by the initial 2006 survey. Compiling responses to the same questions from candidates contesting the whole range of local authority elections will go a long way towards addressing the impact of local context on the recruitment of women candidates and the relative success that they achieve at the ballot box.

8.9 Future research

This research proposed to discover more about the dynamics of women's (under)-representation in local government. On one level this has been successful; examination of the aggregate data showed the variations in

the proportions of women selected and elected over time and the differences between authorities. This information leads onto suggest further questions that need to be addressed by different approaches. For instance I can only speculate on possible socio-demographic reasons for the high proportions of women standing in Camden and low proportions in Hounslow. To find out what happens in these boroughs it would be more appropriate to visit such areas and interview members of the local parties. Most candidates for the main parties are recruited from the local party members, so it would be interesting to know more about party membership recruitment practices. Several councillors I interviewed spoke about the importance of social events for boosting membership of political parties. One councillor in London said that inviting people to a social occasion was an effective way of introducing new people to the local party and had been a successful method of attracting new members. Most of the survey respondents do not approve of positive action to redress the gender imbalance in councils. However, it was used effectively in the London borough elections of 2006 by the Labour party; Labour wanted at least one woman candidate in each multi-member ward. Across all London boroughs the proportion of women standing for Labour was 33% so this was successful but with variations of success, e.g., 24% in Tower Hamlets and 38% in Kensington & Chelsea. What is unknown is whether this policy has the support of local party members or did they resent interference from the central party. I would like to know whether affirmative action by one party encourages the other parties in the boroughs to respond by voluntarily selecting more women candidates.

The Local Candidate Survey in 2006 was the first to be sent to local candidates nationally and broadly achieved the objectives. I am pleased to say the survey has been modified, improved and sent to a sample of candidates in

2007, 2008 and 2009. We now have accumulated data from over 4,500 candidates. Obviously, the fact remains that we have only contacted people who stand for election. Now, I would like to extend this aspect of the research to include party members or women known to be active within community organisations who have not been candidates. Sending a postal questionnaire to candidates is feasible because the home addresses of all candidates are available from local authorities. An on-line questionnaire might be a more effective way to reach a wider range of women. This would require extensive publicity but there are a number of organisations that could assist and already have large audiences, for instance Radio 4's Woman's Hour, the Women's Institute or women's magazines. Campaign groups such as the Fawcett Society or The Women's Local Government Society are already actively publicising women's under-representation and might provide an internet link to a survey. The responses from this method may be a better source of information about why women do not stand for election and point to ways of improving women's descriptive representation.

The interview schedule did not allow for any questions concerning the difference women councillors may make to local party priorities or policies. Nevertheless, some of the councillors spoke about the different concerns of men and women and how the public perceive women councillors to be more approachable. The majority of survey respondents agreed that men and women have different life experiences and bring distinctive insights to council work. A logical progression would be further research by survey and interviews with women councillors into the substantive representation of women in local government. One councillor thought it was important to have positive role models and to publicise the work that women councillors do. One of the central

ideas behind the benefits of increased diversity within councils is that this would improve the public image of councillors. Therefore it would strengthen the case for more women to be recruited if it could be shown that, once elected, women make a different and positive difference to modern local government.

APPENDIX



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Dear Candidate,

Local Election Candidate Survey, 2006

We are carrying out a study of the experience of candidates in local elections. Previous local election studies in England have included the opinions and experiences of councillors but not candidates. We believe this to be the first English national research project to involve large numbers of candidates.

Your name has been selected from the Statement of Persons Nominated supplied by your Local Authority and we would be very grateful if you would help us by completing this questionnaire and returning it in the FREEPOST envelope provided by the 31st of May. Filling in the questionnaire should take no longer than ten minutes of your time to complete.

This study has received the support of the main political parties and is funded by The Local Government Chronicle Elections Centre at the University of Plymouth and the Economic and Social Research Council, (ESRC)

All replies will be treated in total confidence and not divulged to any other person. Reporting of the results will be in summary statistical form so that no individuals can be identified.

We think that you will find completing the questionnaire interesting and very much hope that you will be willing to help us.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Mary Shears by writing to the address above or by email, (mary.shears@plymouth.ac.uk)

A summary of results will be available in the autumn of 2006 on our website: <http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/elections>.

Thank you very much for your help and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Shears
Project Co-ordinator

LGCElections Centre

LOCAL ELECTION CANDIDATE SURVEY, 2006

We are conducting this survey to collect information from candidates to learn more about the people who stand for local elections, their experience of selection and their opinions of the process. All replies will be treated confidentially and anonymised for our analysis.

1. Firstly, we'd like to learn about your previous political and local community activity.

Prior to the 2006 election,

- a. Had you ever been a candidate in metropolitan, district, unitary, London borough and / or county council elections?

Yes ☐₁

No ☐₀

If yes, how many times? and when was the first time?

- b. Had you ever been elected to metropolitan, district, unitary, London borough and / or county councils?

Yes ☐₁

No ☐₀

If yes, how many times? and when was the first time?

Please tick if you have ever:

c	Stood as a Parliamentary candidate	
d	Held a local party office	
e	Held office in a charitable organisation	
g	Held office in a professional association	
h	Held office in a trade union	
i	Held office in women's organisation	
j	Served on a local public body	
k	Had a position of responsibility in a local pressure group	
l	Had a position of responsibility in a local community group	
tick, 1, blank, 0		

YOUR EXPERIENCE OF BECOMING A CANDIDATE FOR THE FIRST TIME

2. Why did you first stand as a candidate in a local election? Please rank the following reasons in order of importance.

	1 st reason	2 nd reason	3 rd reason
I wanted to support my party			
I was asked to stand			
I thought I could win			
Dissatisfaction with previous councillor(s)			
I wanted to do something to improve this area for the residents.			
I knew people on the council who encouraged me to stand			
I felt very strongly about particular issues / or a single issue and wanted to do something.			
Response code	1	2	3

Other reasons, please specify

.....

3. Some people may receive encouragement from those around them when they decide to stand for public office, whilst others may experience indifference or disapproval. How positive or negative were the following people in encouraging you to become a candidate the first time you stood for election? Please tick one box in each row.

	Very Positive	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Very Negative	Not Applicable
Your spouse or partner						
Other family members						
Personal friends						
Community groups						
Business associates						
Party members						
Party agents						
Local Pressure Group						
Women's groups						
Trade unions						
Employers						
Others						
Response code	1	2	3	4	5	6

4. Thinking about your experience of standing for the first time, was the initial decision to put yourself forward for selection?
(Please tick one)

a	Entirely your own		1
b	Consequence of being approached or encouraged by others		2
c	Mixture of a personal decision assisted by supporters.		3

YOUR EXPERIENCE OF SELECTION

To be answered by candidates for registered political parties only.

If standing as a non-party or Independent candidate, please proceed to Question 12

5. Before the recent election were there more people seeking selection for your party in this ward than there were available seats?

Yes ☐₁ No ☐₀

6. Did you apply for more than one seat in 2006?

Yes ☐₁ No ☐₀

7. In your opinion why were you were selected to contest this seat?

	1 st reason	2 nd reason
Incumbent		
Previously a councillor		
Local resident		
Likely to win this seat		
Good reputation		
The only volunteer		
Prepared to stand as paper candidate		
Response code	1	2

Any other reasons?.....

.....

8. To what extent do you think these factors contributed to your successful selection.

	Very much	Quite a lot	Not very much	Not at all
Your previous political experience				
Your previous community involvement				
Being known to members of the selection committee				
Your age				
Your gender				
Your current or previous employment				
Your reputation				
Response code	1	2	3	4

9. Did you feel that the selection process was?
(Please tick one box in each row)

	Very	Quite	Not very	Not at all
Democratic				
Efficient				
Complicated				
Response code	1	2	3	4

10. Are there any aspects of the selection procedure that you feel could be improved?

Yes ☐₁

No ☐₀

11. If Yes, please give details.....

.....

.....

To be answered by all candidates.

12. When you stood for the 2006 election, how confident did you feel of winning this seat? On a scale of 1 - 10, what was your estimation of the probability of winning?

Please circle the appropriate number.

Highly improbable 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Highly probable

THE RECENT ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Some candidates publish information leaflets to be delivered to the residents of their ward. In this recent campaign:

13. Did you produce a campaign leaflet for distribution? Yes No
 ☐₁ ☐₀

If YES, go to Q.14 If NO, go to Q. 16

14. Was your leaflet delivered to all addresses in your ward? ☐₁ ☐₀

If not, how were the addresses selected?

.....

15. When you prepared the leaflet, how important was it to include the following information for voters?

	Very Important	Quite Important	Not Very Important	Not At All Important
Your personal background				
Your previous political experience				
Your record of local community involvement				
Your competency for public office				
Comment on the record of other parties / Councillors				
State your party's local priorities				
Refer to your party's national policies				
Political party information to increase membership				
Response code	1	2	3	4

16. Apart from campaign literature did you canvass the residents by any of these means?

a. Telephone calls Yes ☐₁ No ☐₀

If yes, did you have help with making calls? ☐₁ ☐₀

How were the telephone numbers selected?

.....

b. Public meetings Yes ☐₁ No ☐₀

If yes, how many?
.....

c. Visiting households ☐₁ ☐₀

d. Approximately what percentage of the households in your ward was canvassed by you, or on your behalf during the campaign?
.....%

17. Thinking back to the recent campaign, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The campaign received sufficient coverage by the local media					
The campaign was of little interest to most people in the ward					
Local newspaper coverage of the campaign was fair					
Voters were mostly interested in the national campaign issues of the major parties.					
Response code	1	2	3	4	5

18. Overall, did you enjoy campaigning? Yes ☐₁ No ☐₀

Would you be prepared to stand as a candidate for local election again? Yes ☐₁ No ☐₀

HOLDING PUBLIC OFFICE

19. Almost all adults are eligible to become local councillors, yet relatively few come forward to be candidates. Do you agree or disagree with these possible reasons for the non-involvement of most citizens?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Being a councillor is too time consuming					
Councillors don't have the power to make a difference					
Councillors are insufficiently paid					
Most people are disinterested in local government					
Intrusive media coverage of personal life may discourage some people from standing					
There is a general lack of public knowledge about local government					
Response code	1	2	3	4	5

20. One of the aims of recent modernisation initiatives in local government is to attract a greater cross-section of people to serve as councillors. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
There should be more women as councillors.					
There should be more young people as councillors					
There should be more councillors with ethnic minority backgrounds					
Greater social diversity amongst councillors would improve the public image of local government.					
Greater social diversity amongst councillors would increase voter-turnout					
Women and men have different life experiences and so bring distinctive insights to the work of a council.					
In general, women councillors have different policy priorities than men.					
Response code	1	2	3	4	5

21. Local authorities use a variety of ways to publicise the role of councillors and to encourage more people to stand as candidates. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Local authorities should provide more public information about the work of councillors.					
It is the responsibility of the political parties to recruit candidates					
Councillors are in the best position to recruit new candidates					
Local authorities should advertise for candidates					
Response code	1	2	3	4	5

22. Do you agree or disagree with the following general explanations of why there are relatively few women in politics?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Women are not interested in politics					
Women don't have the confidence for politics					
Women put their families above a political career					
Political parties should encourage more women to be candidates					
Voters discriminate against women candidates					
Too few women come forward to be candidates					
Response code	1	2	3	4	5

23. Do you approve or disapprove of the following suggestions for increasing the numbers of women councillors?

	Strongly Approve	Approve	Neutral	Disapprove	Strongly Disapprove
All women shortlists					
Party quotas for women candidates					

Questions 24 & 25 should be answered only by those who had experience as a councillor, prior to the 2006 election.

24. Approximately how many hours a week did you spend on council duties?

.....hours.

25. Approximately how frequently were you involved in the following activities relating to your position as a councillor?

	More than once a week	More than once a month	About once a month	Less than once a month	Never
Hold ward surgeries					
Circulate newsletters					
Receive letters from residents					
Receive telephone calls from residents					
Receive emails from residents					
Contact an MP on behalf of a resident					
Attend community events					
Attend party meetings					
Contact local media to publicise ward news					
Approached by local reporters to give interviews					
Response code	1	2	3	4	5

Finally, a few questions about you.

26. Are you ? Male ☐₁ Female ☐₂

27. What was your age last birthday? years.

28. Do you live in the ward where you stood for election?.....

29. How would you describe your ethnic background?

30. Educational qualifications: please tick any that you have obtained.

GCSEs or equivalent	
"A" levels or equivalent	
First degree	
Higher degree	
No qualifications	
Professional qualifications, please specify.	
Tick, 1 blank 0	

31. Which of these best describes your current occupation? please tick one.

In full time paid employment		1
In part-time paid employment		2
Self-employed		3
In voluntary occupation		4
Registered unemployed		5
Full-time student		6
Retired		7
Looking after home / children / other relatives		8

Other

32. If currently employed, what is your occupation, or if retired what was your previous occupation?

.....

33. How would you describe your current or previous occupational status? please tick one.

Professional occupation		1
Managerial and / or Technical occupation		2
Skilled occupation, non manual		3
Skilled occupation, manual		4
Partly skilled occupation		5
Unskilled occupation		6

34. Where would you most like to be in ten years from now?

A councillor		1
A Member of Parliament		2
Employed full-time, away from politics		3
Employed by a political party		4
Retired from public life		5

Other.....

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your comments are much appreciated and will contribute enormously towards our aim to reflect the opinions of as many candidates as we can in our report. Please feel free to add any observations of your own about the experience of being a candidate or elaborate on your answers to our questions.

If you would be willing to take part in a follow-up interview?
please write in a telephone number or email address.

Telephone No:.....

Email address:

Mary Shears.
University of Plymouth

The variables and coding for SPSS file: 06 responses /gala2.

1. Candidate identification number. CAN06/001 – CAN06/2802
2. Questionnaire returned 0 = No, 1 = Yes, 2 = Refused, 3 = London reminder
3. Name
4. Party /description as appeared on Statement of Persons Nominations. (open-ended)
5. Description, coded: 1 = Conservative, 2 = Labour, 3 = Liberal Democrat, 4 = Green, 5 = UKIP, 6 = BNP, 7 = Independent, 8 = Others
6. Local authority type, 1 = Metropolitan, 2 = District, 3 =Unitary, 4 = London borough
7. Elected May 2006? 0 = Not elected, 1= Elected
8. Previously candidate / metropolitan, district, unitary, London borough and / or county council elections.
0 = No. 1 = Yes
9. If Yes, how many times? (open-ended)
10. If Yes, when was first time? (open-ended)
11. Previously elected metropolitan, district unitary London borough and or county?
0 = No. 1 = Yes
12. If Yes, how many times? (open-ended)
13. If Yes, when was the first time? (open-ended)

14-23 Indication of the candidates' previous political and community activities.

14. Previously stood as a Parliamentary candidate? 0 = No. 1 = Yes
15. Held a local party office? 0 = No. 1 = Yes
16. Held office in a professional association? 0 = No. 1 = Yes
17. Held office in a charitable organisation? 0=No. 1 = Yes
18. Held office in a professional association, 0 =No. 1 = Yes
19. Held office in a trade union? 0 = No. 1 = Yes
20. Held office in a women's organisation? 0 = No. 1 = Yes
21. Served on a local public body? 0 = No. 1 = Yes
22. Had a position of responsibility in a local pressure group? 0 = No. 1 = Yes
23. Had a position of responsibility in a local community group? 0 = No. 1 = Yes

24-31 Indication of first, second & third reason for standing as a candidate for the first time

- | | |
|---|---|
| 24. Reasons for standing first time: support party | variables 24-31 coded:
0 = not selected
1 = first reason
2 = second reason
3 = third reason |
| 25. Reasons for standing first time: asked to stand | |
| 26. Reasons for standing first time: thought I could win | |
| 27. Reasons for standing first time: dissatisfaction
with previous councillors | |
| 28. Reasons for standing first time: improve area for residents | |
| 29. Reasons for standing first time: knew people on council | |
| 30. Reasons for standing first time: felt strongly about issue | |
| 31. Other reasons for standing, (open-ended) | |

31 - Indication of the level of encouragement from others when the candidate decided to stand for election for the first time.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 31. Your spouse or partner | variables 31 –42, coded:
1 = very positive
2 = positive
3 = neutral
4 = negative
5 = very negative
6 = not applicable |
| 32. Other family members | |
| 33. Personal friends | |
| 34. Community groups | |
| 35. Business associates | |
| 36. Party members | |
| 37. Party agents | |
| 38. Local pressure group | |
| 39. Women's groups | |
| 40. Trade Union | |
| 41. Employers | |
| 42. Others | |

43. The initial decision to stand: candidates were asked to select one from the following statements.

- | | |
|---|-----|
| Entirely your own | = 1 |
| Consequence of being approached or encouraged by others | = 2 |
| Mixture of personal decision assisted by supporters | = 3 |

44 – 66 were for candidates for registered political parties only, experience of selection for May 2006.

44. More people seeking election than seats, 0 = No. 1 = Yes

45. Did you apply for more than one seat in 2006? 0 = No, 1 = Yes

47-53 Why were you selected?

47. Incumbent

48. Previously a councillor

49. Local resident

50. Likely to win the seat

51. Good reputation

52. The only volunteer

53. Prepared to stand as a paper candidate

Variables 47-53 coded:

0= not selected

1= first reason

2= second reason

54. Any other reasons,(open=ended)

55- 61 Indication of the contribution of these factors to successful election in 2006

55. Your previous political experience

56. Your previous community involvement

57. Being known to members of the
selection committee

58. Your age

59. Your gender

60. Your current or previous employment

61. Your reputation

Variables 55-61 coded:

1= very much

2= Quite a lot

3= Not very much

4= Not at all

62-64 was the selection process:

62. Democratic

63. Efficient

64. Complicated

Variables 62-64 coded:

1= Very

2= Quite

3= Not very

4= Not at all

65. Are there any aspects of the selection procedure that could be improved?

0= No, 1=Yes

66. If yes , please give details (open-ended)

All candidates.

67. Estimation of the probability of winning, (select 1 number) 1-10

68. Did you produce a campaign leaflet for distribution? 0 = No, 1 = Yes

69. Was your leaflet delivered to all addresses in your ward? 0 = No, 1 = Yes

70. If not how were they selected? (open-ended)

71- 78 Indication of importance of including this information in the campaign leaflet.

71. Your personal background.

72. Your previous political experience

variables 71-78 coded:

73. Your record of local community involvement

74. Your competency for public office

75. Comment on the record of other parties/ councillors

1 = very important

76. State you party's local priorities

2 = important

77. Refer to your party's national policies

3 = not very important

78. Political party information to increase membership

4 = not at all important

79. Canvass by telephone? 0 = No, 1 = Yes

80. Did you have help making calls? 0 = No, 1 = Yes

81. How were the telephone numbers selected? (open-ended)

82. Canvass by public meetings? 0 = No, 1 = Yes

83. If Yes, how many ? (open-ended)

84. Canvass by visiting households? 0 = No, 1 = Yes

85. Approximately what percentage of the households in your ward did you canvass during the campaign? (open-ended)

86-89 Indication of whether or not the candidate agreed with these statements

coded: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree. 5 = strongly disagree

86. The campaign received sufficient coverage by the local media

87. The campaign was of little interest to most people in the ward

88. Local newspaper coverage of the campaign was fair

89. Voters were mostly interested in the national campaign issues of the major parties

90. Overall, did you enjoy campaigning? 0 = No, 1 = Yes

91. Would you be prepared to stand as a candidate again? 0 = No, 1 = Yes

92 -97 The candidates were asked if they agreed or disagreed with these possible reasons for the shortage of candidates in local elections.

coded: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree. 5 = strongly disagree

92. Being a councillor is too time-consuming

93. Councillors don't have the power to make a difference

94. Councillors are insufficiently paid

95. Most people are not interested in local government

96. Intrusive media coverage of personal life may discourage some people from standing

97. There is a general lack of public knowledge about local government

98- 104 The candidates were asked if they agreed or disagreed with these modernisation initiatives to attract a greater cross-section of people to serve as councillors.

coded: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree. 5 = strongly disagree

98. There should be more women as councillors

99. There should be more young people as councillors

100. There should be more councillors with ethnic minority backgrounds

101. Greater social diversity amongst councillors would improve the public image of local government

102. Greater social diversity amongst councillors would improve voter turnout

103. Women and men have different life experiences and so bring distinctive insights to the work of a council

104. In general, women councillors have different policy priorities than men.

105- 108 Opinion of possible ways to publicise the role of councillors and recruit candidates.

coded: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree. 5 = strongly disagree

105. Local authorities should provide more public information about the work of councillors

106. It is the responsibility of the political parties to recruit candidates

107. Councillors are in the best position to recruit new candidates

108. Local authorities should advertise for candidates

109- 114 Opinion of possible explanations for lower proportion of women in politics

coded: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree. 5 = strongly disagree

109. Women are not interested in politics

110. Women don't have the confidence for politics

111. Women put their families above a political career

112. Political parties should encourage more women to be candidates

113. Voters discriminate against women candidates

114. Too few women come forward to be candidates

115- 116 Opinion of suggestions for increasing number of women councillors

coded: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree. 5 = strongly disagree

115. All women shortlists

116. party quotas for women candidates

117-128 To be answered only by those who had been councillors prior to 2006 election

117. Approximately how many hours a week did you spend on council duties?
(open-ended)

118 – 127 Approximately how frequently were you involved in these activities as a councillor.

coded: 1 = more than once a week, 2 = more than once a month, 3 = about once a month, 4 = less than once a month, 5 = Never.

- 118. Hold ward surgeries
- 119. Circulate newsletters
- 120. Receive letters from residents
- 121. Receive telephone calls from residents
- 122. Receive emails from residents
- 123. Contact an MP on behalf of a resident
- 124. Attend community events
- 125. Attend party meetings
- 126. Contact local media to publicise ward news
- 127. Approached by local reporters to give interviews

128 ... for all candidates

128. Are you, male or female? 1 = male. 2 = female

129. What was your age last birthday? (open-ended)

130. Do you live in the ward where you stood for election? 0= No, 1= Yes

131. How would you describe your ethnic background, (open ended)

Variables 132-136, coded 0 = not highest, 1 = highest.

- 132. GCSE's or equivalent
- 133 "A" levels or equivalent
- 134. First degree
- 135. Higher degree

136. No qualifications. 0 = have qualifications. 1 = no qualifications

137 professional qualification, please specify. (open-ended)

138. Which of these best describes your current occupation? Please tick one

- 1 = in full-time employment
- 2 = in part-time employment
- 3 = self-employed
- 4 = in voluntary occupation
- 5 = registered unemployed
- 6 = full-time student
- 7 = retired
- 8 = looking after home /children /elderly relatives

139. Other... (open-ended)

140. Current occupation or if retired former occupation (open-ended)

141. Current or past occupational status

- 1= Professional occupation
- 2= Managerial and or technical occupation
- 3= Skilled occupation, non manual
- 4= Skilled occupation, manual
- 5= Partly skilled occupation
- 6= Unskilled occupation

142. Where would you like to be in ten years from now?

- 1= A councillor
- 2.= An MP
- 3. Employed full time away from politics
- 4. Employed by a political party
- 5. Retired from public life

If willing to be contacted again for an interview. 0= No 1=Yes

143, telephone no.

144. email address

SPSS output for loglinear models in Chapter 6.

Model 2 tests whether men and women hold different opinions concerning the role of political parties as the main supply of candidates and if that opinion is modified by council experience.

H_0 . *The same proportion of men and women will agree that political parties should encourage more women to be candidates.*

Hierarchical Loglinear Analysis

[DataSet1] C:\Documents and Settings\My Documents\gala2.sav

Data Information

		N
Cases	Valid	1127
	Out of Range ^a	0
	Missing	55
	Weighted Valid	1127
Categories	preve	2
	gender	2
	partiesencouragewomen	4

a. Cases rejected because of out of range factor values.

Design 1

Convergence Information

Generating Class	preve*gender*partiesencouragewomen
Number of Iterations	1
Max. Difference between Observed and Fitted Marginals	.000
Convergence Criterion	.308

Cell Counts and Residuals

preve	gender	partiesencouragewomen	Observed		Expected		Residuals	Std. Residuals
			Count ^a	%	Count	%		
No	Male	disagree	41.500	3.7%	41.500	3.7%	.000	.000
		neutral	140.500	12.5%	140.500	12.5%	.000	.000
		agree	308.500	27.4%	308.500	27.4%	.000	.000
		2	.500	.0%	.500	.0%	.000	.000
	Female	disagree	9.500	.8%	9.500	.8%	.000	.000
		neutral	44.500	3.9%	44.500	3.9%	.000	.000
		agree	216.500	19.2%	216.500	19.2%	.000	.000
		2	.500	.0%	.500	.0%	.000	.000
Yes	Male	disagree	30.500	2.7%	30.500	2.7%	.000	.000
		neutral	63.500	5.6%	63.500	5.6%	.000	.000
		agree	171.500	15.2%	171.500	15.2%	.000	.000
		2	.500	.0%	.500	.0%	.000	.000
	Female	disagree	4.500	.4%	4.500	.4%	.000	.000
		neutral	25.500	2.3%	25.500	2.3%	.000	.000
		agree	76.500	6.8%	76.500	6.8%	.000	.000
		2	.500	.0%	.500	.0%	.000	.000

a. For saturated models, .500 has been added to all observed cells.

Goodness-of-Fit Tests

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Likelihood Ratio	.000	0	.
Pearson	.000	0	.

K-Way and Higher-Order Effects

	K	df	Likelihood Ratio		Pearson		Number of Iterations
			Chi-Square	Sig.	Chi-Square	Sig.	
K-way and Higher Order Effects	1	15	1637.303	.000	1788.280	.000	0
	2	10	40.450	.000	39.903	.000	2
	3	3	4.236	.237	4.362	.225	4
K-way Effects ^b	1	5	1596.853	.000	1748.376	.000	0
	2	7	36.214	.000	35.541	.000	0
	3	3	4.236	.237	4.362	.225	0

df used for these tests have NOT been adjusted for structural or sampling zeros. Tests using these df may be conservative.

a. Tests that k-way and higher order effects are zero.

b. Tests that k-way effects are zero.

Step Summary

Step ^b	Generating Class ^c	Effects	Chi-Square ^a	df	Sig.	Number of Iterations
0	Generating Class ^c	preve*gender*partiesencouragewomen	.000	0		
	Deleted Effect 1	preve*gender*partiesencouragewomen	4.236	3	.237	4
1	Generating Class ^c	preve*gender, preve*partiesencouragewomen, gender*partiesencouragewomen	4.236	3	.237	
	Deleted Effect 1	preve*gender	4.933	1	.026	2
	2	preve*partiesencouragewomen	1.715	3	.634	2
	3	gender*partiesencouragewomen	28.201	3	.000	2
2	Generating Class ^c	preve*gender, gender*partiesencouragewomen	5.951	6	.429	
	Deleted Effect 1	preve*gender	5.615	1	.018	2
	2	gender*partiesencouragewomen	28.883	3	.000	2
3	Generating Class ^c	preve*gender, gender*partiesencouragewomen	5.951	6	.429	

a. For 'Deleted Effect', this is the change in the Chi-Square after the effect is deleted from the model.

b. At each step, the effect with the largest significance level for the Likelihood Ratio Change is deleted, provided the significance level is larger than .050.

c. Statistics are displayed for the best model at each step after step 0.

Convergence Information^a

Generating Class	preve*gender, gender*partiesencouragewomen
Number of Iterations	0
Max. Difference between Observed and Fitted Marginals	.000
Convergence Criterion	.308

a. Statistics for the final model after Backward Elimination.

Cell Counts and Residuals

preve	gender	partiesencouragewomen	Observed		Expected		Residuals	Std. Residuals
			Count	%	Count	%		
No	Male	disagree	41.000	3.6%	46.108	4.1%	-5.108	-.752
		neutral	140.000	12.4%	131.829	11.7%	8.171	.712
		agree	308.000	27.3%	311.064	27.6%	-3.064	-.174
		2	.000	.0%	.000	.0%	.000	.000
	Female	disagree	9.000	.8%	9.350	.8%	-.350	-.115
		neutral	44.000	3.9%	49.628	4.4%	-5.628	-.799
		agree	216.000	19.2%	210.021	18.6%	5.979	.413
		2	.000	.0%	.000	.0%	.000	.000
Yes	Male	disagree	30.000	2.7%	24.892	2.2%	5.108	1.024
		neutral	63.000	5.6%	71.171	6.3%	-8.171	-.969
		agree	171.000	15.2%	167.936	14.9%	3.064	.236
		2	.000	.0%	.000	.0%	.000	.000
	Female	disagree	4.000	.4%	3.650	.3%	.350	.183
		neutral	25.000	2.2%	19.372	1.7%	5.628	1.279
		agree	76.000	6.7%	81.979	7.3%	-5.979	-.660
		2	.000	.0%	.000	.0%	.000	.000

Goodness-of-Fit Tests

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Likelihood Ratio	5.951	6	.429
Pearson	6.071	6	.415

Model 3 tests whether there is any significant relationship between the decision to stand for election and occupational status whilst controlling for gender.

Hierarchical Loglinear Analysis

[DataSet1] C:\Documents and Settings\Owner\My Documents\gala2.sav

H_0 , The same proportion of men and women will report that it was their own decision to stand for election.

Data Information

		N
Cases	Valid	1106
	Out of Range ^a	0
	Missing	76
	Weighted Valid	1106
Categories	decide	3
	gender	2
	status2	4

a. Cases rejected because of out of range factor values.

Design 1

Convergence Information

Generating Class	decide*gender*status2
Number of Iterations	1
Max. Difference between Observed and Fitted Marginals	.000
Convergence Criterion	.250

Cell Counts and Residuals

decide	gender	status2	Observed		Expected		Residuals	Std. Residuals
			Count ^a	%	Count	%		
Entirely your own	Male	Professional occupation	99.500	9.0%	99.500	9.0%	.000	.000
		Managerial /technical occupation	55.500	5.0%	55.500	5.0%	.000	.000
		Skilled occupation non manual	8.500	.8%	8.500	.8%	.000	.000
		Skilled manual/partly skilled & unskilled occupations	16.500	1.5%	16.500	1.5%	.000	.000
	Female	Professional occupation	20.500	1.9%	20.500	1.9%	.000	.000
		Managerial /technical occupation	8.500	.8%	8.500	.8%	.000	.000
		Skilled occupation non manual	7.500	.7%	7.500	.7%	.000	.000
		Skilled manual/partly skilled & unskilled occupations	2.500	.2%	2.500	.2%	.000	.000
Consequence of being approached	Male	Professional occupation	150.500	13.6%	150.500	13.6%	.000	.000
		Managerial /technical occupation	92.500	8.4%	92.500	8.4%	.000	.000
		Skilled occupation non manual	20.500	1.9%	20.500	1.9%	.000	.000
		Skilled manual/partly skilled & unskilled occupations	45.500	4.1%	45.500	4.1%	.000	.000
	Female	Professional occupation	115.500	10.4%	115.500	10.4%	.000	.000
		Managerial /technical occupation	49.500	4.5%	49.500	4.5%	.000	.000
		Skilled occupation non manual	33.500	3.0%	33.500	3.0%	.000	.000
		Skilled manual/partly skilled & unskilled occupations	17.500	1.6%	17.500	1.6%	.000	.000
Mixture of personal & supporters	Male	Professional occupation	118.500	10.7%	118.500	10.7%	.000	.000
		Managerial /technical occupation	86.500	7.8%	86.500	7.8%	.000	.000
		Skilled occupation non manual	19.500	1.8%	19.500	1.8%	.000	.000
		Skilled manual/partly skilled & unskilled occupations	36.500	3.3%	36.500	3.3%	.000	.000
	Female	Professional occupation	60.500	5.5%	60.500	5.5%	.000	.000
		Managerial /technical occupation	25.500	2.3%	25.500	2.3%	.000	.000
		Skilled occupation non manual	15.500	1.4%	15.500	1.4%	.000	.000
		Skilled manual/partly skilled & unskilled occupations	11.500	1.0%	11.500	1.0%	.000	.000

a. For saturated models, .500 has been added to all observed cells.

Goodness-of-Fit Tests

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Likelihood Ratio	.000	0	.
Pearson	.000	0	.

K-Way and Higher-Order Effects

	K	df	Likelihood Ratio		Pearson		Number of Iterations
			Chi-Square	Sig.	Chi-Square	Sig.	
K-way and Higher Order Effects	1	23	828.443	.000	881.790	.000	0
	2	17	84.256	.000	84.299	.000	2
	3	6	2.761	.838	2.834	.829	4
K-way Effects ^a	1	6	744.187	.000	797.492	.000	0
	2	11	81.495	.000	81.464	.000	0
	3	6	2.761	.838	2.834	.829	0

a. Tests that k-way and higher order effects are zero.

b. Tests that k-way effects are zero.

Backward Elimination Statistics

Step Summary

Step ^b	Generating Class ^c	Effects	Chi-Square ^a	df	Sig.	Number of Iterations
0	Generating Class ^c	decide*g ender*sta tus2	.000	0	.	
	Deleted Effect 1	decide*g ender*sta tus2	2.761	6	.838	4
1	Generating Class ^c	decide*g ender, decide*st atus2, gender*st atus2	2.761	6	.838	
	Deleted Effect 1	decide*g ender	42.989	2	.000	2
	2	decide*st atus2	5.933	6	.431	2
	3	gender*st atus2	31.580	3	.000	2
2	Generating Class ^c	decide*g ender, gender*st atus2	8.694	12	.729	
	Deleted Effect 1	decide*g ender	43.486	2	.000	2
	2	gender*st atus2	32.077	3	.000	2
3	Generating Class ^c	decide*g ender, gender*st atus2	8.694	12	.729	

a. For 'Deleted Effect', this is the change in the Chi-Square after the effect is deleted from the model.

b. At each step, the effect with the largest significance level for the Likelihood Ratio Change is deleted, provided the significance level is larger than .050.

c. Statistics are displayed for the best model at each step after step 0.

Convergence Information^a

Generating Class	decide*gender, gender*status2
Number of Iterations	0
Max. Difference between Observed and Fitted Marginals	.000
Convergence Criterion	.250

a. Statistics for the final model after Backward Elimination.

Cell Counts and Residuals

decide	gender	status2	Observed		Expected		Residuals	Std. Residuals
			Count	%	Count	%		
Entirely your own	Male	Professional occupation	99.000	9.0%	87.804	7.9%	11.196	1.195
		Managerial /technical occupation	55.000	5.0%	55.745	5.0%	-.745	-.100
		Skilled occupation non manual	8.000	.7%	11.245	1.0%	-3.245	-.968
		Skilled manual/partly skilled & unskilled occupations	16.000	1.4%	23.207	2.1%	-7.207	-1.496
	Female	Professional occupation	20.000	1.8%	19.931	1.8%	.069	.015
		Managerial /technical occupation	8.000	.7%	8.381	.8%	-.381	-.132
		Skilled occupation non manual	7.000	.6%	5.622	.5%	1.378	.581
		Skilled manual/partly skilled & unskilled occupations	2.000	.2%	3.066	.3%	-1.066	-.609
Consequence of being approached	Male	Professional occupation	150.000	13.6%	151.437	13.7%	-1.437	-.117
		Managerial /technical occupation	92.000	8.3%	96.144	8.7%	-4.144	-.423
		Skilled occupation non manual	20.000	1.8%	19.394	1.8%	.606	.138
		Skilled manual/partly skilled & unskilled occupations	45.000	4.1%	40.026	3.6%	4.974	.786
	Female	Professional occupation	115.000	10.4%	115.276	10.4%	-.276	-.026
		Managerial /technical occupation	49.000	4.4%	48.475	4.4%	.525	.075
		Skilled occupation non manual	33.000	3.0%	32.514	2.9%	.486	.085
		Skilled manual/partly skilled & unskilled occupations	17.000	1.5%	17.735	1.6%	-.735	-.174
Mixture of personal & supporters	Male	Professional occupation	118.000	10.7%	127.759	11.6%	-9.759	-.863
		Managerial /technical occupation	86.000	7.8%	81.112	7.3%	4.888	.543
		Skilled occupation non manual	19.000	1.7%	16.362	1.5%	2.638	.652
		Skilled manual/partly skilled & unskilled occupations	36.000	3.3%	33.767	3.1%	2.233	.384
	Female	Professional occupation	60.000	5.4%	59.793	5.4%	.207	.027
		Managerial /technical occupation	25.000	2.3%	25.144	2.3%	-.144	-.029
		Skilled occupation non manual	15.000	1.4%	16.865	1.5%	-1.865	-.454
		Skilled manual/partly skilled & unskilled occupations	11.000	1.0%	9.199	.8%	1.801	.594

Goodness-of-Fit Tests

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Likelihood Ratio	8.694	12	.729
Pearson	8.385	12	.754

Model 4 tests whether there is any significant relationship between the gender and occupation of respondents and whether they first stood as a candidate because they were asked to stand.

Hierarchical Loglinear Analysis

[DataSet1] C:\Documents and Settings\Owner\My Documents\gala2.sav

H_0 , *The same proportion of men and women first stood as candidates because they were asked to stand.*

Data Information

		N
Cases	Valid	1135
	Out of Range ^a	0
	Missing	47
	Weighted Valid	1135
Categories	gender	2
	askedstand	2
	working	3

a. Cases rejected because of out of range factor values.

Design 1

Convergence Information

Generating Class	gender*askedstand*working
Number of Iterations	1
Max. Difference between Observed and Fitted Marginals	.000
Convergence Criterion	.250

Cell Counts and Residuals

gender	askedstand	working	Observed		Expected		Residuals	Std. Residuals
			Count ^a	%	Count	%		
Male	not selected	In full-time paid employment	157.500	13.9%	157.500	13.9%	.000	.000
		In part-time paid employment	22.500	2.0%	22.500	2.0%	.000	.000
		any other occupation/ retired	157.500	13.9%	157.500	13.9%	.000	.000
	asked to stand	In full-time paid employment	174.500	15.4%	174.500	15.4%	.000	.000
		In part-time paid employment	28.500	2.5%	28.500	2.5%	.000	.000
		any other occupation/ retired	221.500	19.5%	221.500	19.5%	.000	.000
Female	not selected	In full-time paid employment	40.500	3.6%	40.500	3.6%	.000	.000
		In part-time paid employment	26.500	2.3%	26.500	2.3%	.000	.000
		any other occupation/ retired	65.500	5.8%	65.500	5.8%	.000	.000
	asked to stand	In full-time paid employment	64.500	5.7%	64.500	5.7%	.000	.000
		In part-time paid employment	52.500	4.6%	52.500	4.6%	.000	.000
		any other occupation/ retired	129.500	11.4%	129.500	11.4%	.000	.000

a. For saturated models, .500 has been added to all observed cells.

Goodness-of-Fit Tests

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Likelihood Ratio	.000	0	.
Pearson	.000	0	.

K-Way and Higher-Order Effects

	K	df	Likelihood Ratio		Pearson		Number of Iterations
			Chi-Square	Sig.	Chi-Square	Sig.	
K-way and Higher Order Effects	1	11	556.248	.000	552.665	.000	0
	2	7	71.776	.000	76.432	.000	2
	3	2	.068	.967	.068	.967	3
K-way Effects ^a	1	4	484.472	.000	476.233	.000	0
	2	5	71.708	.000	76.364	.000	0
	3	2	.068	.967	.068	.967	0

a. Tests that k-way and higher order effects are zero.

b. Tests that k-way effects are zero.

Backward Elimination Statistics

Step Summary

Step ^b	Generating Class ^c	Effects	Chi-Square ^a	df	Sig.	Number of Iterations
0		gender*a skedstan d*working	.000	0	.	
	Deleted Effect 1	gender*a skedstan d*working	.068	2	.967	3
1		gender*a skedstan d, gender*w orking, askedsta nd*workin g	.068	2	.967	
	Deleted Effect 1	gender*a skedstan d	7.510	1	.006	2
	2	gender*w orking	57.325	2	.000	2
	3	askedsta nd*workin g	3.245	2	.197	2
2		gender*a skedstan d, gender*w orking	3.313	4	.507	
	Deleted Effect 1	gender*a skedstan d	9.324	1	.002	2
	2	gender*w orking	59.139	2	.000	2
3		gender*a skedstan d, gender*w orking	3.313	4	.507	

a. For 'Deleted Effect', this is the change in the Chi-Square after the effect is deleted from the model.

b. At each step, the effect with the largest significance level for the Likelihood Ratio Change is deleted, provided the significance level is larger than .050.

c. Statistics are displayed for the best model at each step after step 0.

Cell Counts and Residuals

gender	askedstand	working	Observed		Expected		Residuals	Std. Residuals
			Count	%	Count	%		
Male	not selected	In full-time paid employment	157.000	13.8%	146.530	12.9%	10.470	.865
		In part-time paid employment	22.000	1.9%	22.134	2.0%	-.134	-.029
		any other occupation/ retired	157.000	13.8%	167.336	14.7%	-10.336	-.799
	asked to stand	In full-time paid employment	174.000	15.3%	184.470	16.3%	-10.470	-.771
		In part-time paid employment	28.000	2.5%	27.866	2.5%	.134	.025
		any other occupation/ retired	221.000	19.5%	210.664	18.6%	10.336	.712
Female	not selected	In full-time paid employment	40.000	3.5%	36.234	3.2%	3.766	.626
		In part-time paid employment	26.000	2.3%	27.176	2.4%	-1.176	-.225
		any other occupation/ retired	65.000	5.7%	67.590	6.0%	-2.590	-.315
	asked to stand	In full-time paid employment	64.000	5.6%	67.766	6.0%	-3.766	-.457
		In part-time paid employment	52.000	4.6%	50.824	4.5%	1.176	.165
		any other occupation/ retired	129.000	11.4%	126.410	11.1%	2.590	.230

Convergence Information^a

Generating Class	gender*askedstand, gender*working
Number of Iterations	0
Max. Difference between Observed and Fitted Marginals	.000
Convergence Criterion	.250

a. Statistics for the final model after Backward Elimination.

Goodness-of-Fit Tests

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Likelihood Ratio	3.313	4	.507
Pearson	3.321	4	.506

Model 5 tests whether there is any significant relationship between the gender of respondents, whether they agree with the statement "councillors don't have the power to make a difference" and the type of authority in which they stood in 2006.

Hierarchical Loglinear Analysis

[DataSet1] C:\Documents and Settings\Owner\My Documents\gala2.sav

H_0 , *The same proportion of men and women will agree that councillors don't have the power to make a difference.*

Data Information

		N
Cases	Valid	1125
	Out of Range ^a	0
	Missing	57
	Weighted Valid	1125
Categories	gender	2
	la2	4
	makedifference	3

a. Cases rejected because of out of range factor values.

Design 1**Convergence Information**

Generating Class	gender*la2*makedifference
Number of Iterations	1
Max. Difference between Observed and Fitted Marginals	.000
Convergence Criterion	.250

Cell Counts and Residuals

gender	la2	makedifference	Observed		Expected		Residuals	Std. Residuals
			Count ^a	%	Count	%		
Male	Metropolitan	Strongly agree/agree	46.500	4.1%	46.500	4.1%	.000	.000
		Neutral	22.500	2.0%	22.500	2.0%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	59.500	5.3%	59.500	5.3%	.000	.000
	District	Strongly agree/agree	133.500	11.9%	133.500	11.9%	.000	.000
		Neutral	56.500	5.0%	56.500	5.0%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	128.500	11.4%	128.500	11.4%	.000	.000
	Unitary	Strongly agree/agree	31.500	2.8%	31.500	2.8%	.000	.000
		Neutral	17.500	1.6%	17.500	1.6%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	26.500	2.4%	26.500	2.4%	.000	.000
	London Borough	Strongly agree/agree	94.500	8.4%	94.500	8.4%	.000	.000
		Neutral	35.500	3.2%	35.500	3.2%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	107.500	9.6%	107.500	9.6%	.000	.000
Female	Metropolitan	Strongly agree/agree	18.500	1.6%	18.500	1.6%	.000	.000
		Neutral	4.500	.4%	4.500	.4%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	27.500	2.4%	27.500	2.4%	.000	.000
	District	Strongly agree/agree	69.500	6.2%	69.500	6.2%	.000	.000
		Neutral	26.500	2.4%	26.500	2.4%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	75.500	6.7%	75.500	6.7%	.000	.000
	Unitary	Strongly agree/agree	7.500	.7%	7.500	.7%	.000	.000
		Neutral	4.500	.4%	4.500	.4%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	9.500	.8%	9.500	.8%	.000	.000
	London Borough	Strongly agree/agree	35.500	3.2%	35.500	3.2%	.000	.000
		Neutral	25.500	2.3%	25.500	2.3%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	72.500	6.4%	72.500	6.4%	.000	.000

a. For saturated models, .500 has been added to all observed cells.

Goodness-of-Fit Tests

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Likelihood Ratio	.000	0	.
Pearson	.000	0	.

K-Way and Higher-Order Effects

	K	df	Likelihood Ratio		Pearson		Number of Iterations
			Chi-Square	Sig.	Chi-Square	Sig.	
K-way and Higher Order Effects	1	23	686.010	.000	710.456	.000	0
	2	17	30.438	.023	29.786	.028	2
	3	6	6.337	.387	6.166	.405	3
K-way Effects ^b	1	6	655.572	.000	680.670	.000	0
	2	11	24.101	.012	23.620	.014	0
	3	6	6.337	.387	6.166	.405	0

a. Tests that k-way and higher order effects are zero.

b. Tests that k-way effects are zero.

Step Summary

Step ^b	Generating Class ^c	Effects	Chi-Square ^a	df	Sig.	Number of Iterations
0	Generating Class ^c	gender*la2*makedifference	.000	0	.	
	Deleted Effect 1	gender*la2*makedifference	6.337	6	.387	3
1	Generating Class ^c	gender*la2, gender*makedifference, la2*make difference	6.337	6	.387	
	Deleted Effect 1	gender*la2	10.428	3	.015	2
	2	gender*makedifference	4.677	2	.096	2
	3	la2*make difference	8.580	6	.199	2
2	Generating Class ^c	gender*la2, gender*makedifference	14.917	12	.246	
	Deleted Effect 1	gender*la2	10.636	3	.014	2
	2	gender*makedifference	4.885	2	.087	2
3	Generating Class ^c	gender*la2, makedifference	19.802	14	.137	
	Deleted Effect 1	gender*la2	10.636	3	.014	2
	2	makedifference	160.969	2	.000	2
4	Generating Class ^c	gender*la2, makedifference	19.802	14	.137	

a. For 'Deleted Effect', this is the change in the Chi-Square after the effect is deleted from the model.

b. At each step, the effect with the largest significance level for the Likelihood Ratio Change is deleted, provided the significance level is larger than .050.

c. Statistics are displayed for the best model at each step after step 0.

Convergence Information^a

Generating Class	gender*la2, makedifference
Number of Iterations	0
Max. Difference between Observed and Fitted Marginals	.000
Convergence Criterion	.250

a. Statistics for the final model after Backward Elimination.

Cell Counts and Residuals

gender	la2	makedifference	Observed		Expected		Residuals	Std. Residuals
			Count	%	Count	%		
Male	Metropolitan	Strongly agree/agree	46.000	4.1%	48.881	4.3%	-2.881	-.412
		Neutral	22.000	2.0%	21.336	1.9%	.664	.144
		Disagree/strongly disagree	59.000	5.2%	56.783	5.0%	2.217	.294
	District	Strongly agree/agree	133.000	11.8%	122.010	10.8%	10.990	.995
		Neutral	56.000	5.0%	53.256	4.7%	2.744	.376
		Disagree/strongly disagree	128.000	11.4%	141.734	12.6%	-13.734	-1.154
	Unitary	Strongly agree/agree	31.000	2.8%	28.482	2.5%	2.518	.472
		Neutral	17.000	1.5%	12.432	1.1%	4.568	1.296
		Disagree/strongly disagree	26.000	2.3%	33.086	2.9%	-7.086	-1.232
	London Borough	Strongly agree/agree	94.000	8.4%	90.834	8.1%	3.166	.332
		Neutral	35.000	3.1%	39.648	3.5%	-4.648	-.738
		Disagree/strongly disagree	107.000	9.5%	105.518	9.4%	1.482	.144
Female	Metropolitan	Strongly agree/agree	18.000	1.6%	18.860	1.7%	-.860	-.198
		Neutral	4.000	.4%	8.232	.7%	-4.232	-1.475
		Disagree/strongly disagree	27.000	2.4%	21.908	1.9%	5.092	1.088
	District	Strongly agree/agree	69.000	6.1%	65.431	5.8%	3.569	.441
		Neutral	26.000	2.3%	28.560	2.5%	-2.560	-.479
		Disagree/strongly disagree	75.000	6.7%	76.009	6.8%	-1.009	-.116
	Unitary	Strongly agree/agree	7.000	.6%	7.698	.7%	-.698	-.251
		Neutral	4.000	.4%	3.360	.3%	.640	.349
		Disagree/strongly disagree	9.000	.8%	8.942	.8%	.058	.019
	London Borough	Strongly agree/agree	35.000	3.1%	50.805	4.5%	-15.805	-2.217
		Neutral	25.000	2.2%	22.176	2.0%	2.824	.600
		Disagree/strongly disagree	72.000	6.4%	59.019	5.2%	12.981	1.690

Goodness-of-Fit Tests

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Likelihood Ratio	19.802	14	.137
Pearson	18.987	14	.165

Model 6 tests whether there is any significant relationship between the gender and party affiliation of respondents and whether or not they agree with the statement "In general, women councillors have different policy priorities than men".

Hierarchical Loglinear Analysis

[DataSet1] C:\Documents and Settings\Owner\My Documents\lgala2.sav

H_0 , *The same proportion of men and women will agree that in general women councillors have different policy priorities than men.*

Data Information

		N
Cases	Valid	1141
	Out of Range ^a	0
	Missing	41
	Weighted Valid	1141
Categories	gender	2
	mainparties	5
	polycypriorities	3

a. Cases rejected because of out of range factor values.

Design 1

Convergence Information

Generating Class	gender*mainparties*polycypriorities
Number of Iterations	1
Max. Difference between Observed and Fitted Marginals	.000
Convergence Criterion	.250

Cell Counts and Residuals

gender	mainparties	policypriorities	Observed		Expected		Residuals	Std. Residuals
			Count ^a	%	Count	%		
Male	Conservative	Strongly agree/ agree	46.500	4.1%	46.500	4.1%	.000	.000
		Neutral	93.500	8.2%	93.500	8.2%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	78.500	6.9%	78.500	6.9%	.000	.000
	Labour	Strongly agree/ agree	67.500	5.9%	67.500	5.9%	.000	.000
		Neutral	73.500	6.4%	73.500	6.4%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	74.500	6.5%	74.500	6.5%	.000	.000
	Liberal Democrat	Strongly agree/ agree	48.500	4.3%	48.500	4.3%	.000	.000
		Neutral	88.500	7.8%	88.500	7.8%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	62.500	5.5%	62.500	5.5%	.000	.000
	Green	Strongly agree/ agree	16.500	1.4%	16.500	1.4%	.000	.000
		Neutral	20.500	1.8%	20.500	1.8%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	10.500	.9%	10.500	.9%	.000	.000
	All other parties	Strongly agree/ agree	25.500	2.2%	25.500	2.2%	.000	.000
		Neutral	34.500	3.0%	34.500	3.0%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	29.500	2.6%	29.500	2.6%	.000	.000
Female	Conservative	Strongly agree/ agree	46.500	4.1%	46.500	4.1%	.000	.000
		Neutral	41.500	3.6%	41.500	3.6%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	17.500	1.5%	17.500	1.5%	.000	.000
	Labour	Strongly agree/ agree	32.500	2.8%	32.500	2.8%	.000	.000
		Neutral	31.500	2.8%	31.500	2.8%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	26.500	2.3%	26.500	2.3%	.000	.000
	Liberal Democrat	Strongly agree/ agree	51.500	4.5%	51.500	4.5%	.000	.000
		Neutral	35.500	3.1%	35.500	3.1%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	21.500	1.9%	21.500	1.9%	.000	.000
	Green	Strongly agree/ agree	31.500	2.8%	31.500	2.8%	.000	.000
		Neutral	19.500	1.7%	19.500	1.7%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	5.500	.5%	5.500	.5%	.000	.000
	All other parties	Strongly agree/ agree	13.500	1.2%	13.500	1.2%	.000	.000
		Neutral	6.500	.6%	6.500	.6%	.000	.000
		Disagree/strongly disagree	4.500	.4%	4.500	.4%	.000	.000

a. For saturated models, .500 has been added to all observed cells.

Goodness-of-Fit Tests

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Likelihood Ratio	.000	0	
Pearson	.000	0	

K-Way and Higher-Order Effects

	K	df	Likelihood Ratio		Pearson		Number of Iterations
			Chi-Square	Sig.	Chi-Square	Sig.	
K-way and Higher Order Effects	1	29	496.038	.000	489.018	.000	0
	2	22	103.224	.000	110.955	.000	2
	3	8	10.359	.241	10.292	.245	3
K-way Effects ^b	1	7	392.814	.000	378.063	.000	0
	2	14	92.865	.000	100.662	.000	0
	3	8	10.359	.241	10.292	.245	0

a. Tests that k-way and higher order effects are zero.

b. Tests that k-way effects are zero.

Step Summary

Step ^b	Generating Class ^c	Effects	Chi-Square ^a	df	Sig.	Number of Iterations
0		gender*mainparties *policypriorities	.000	0		
	Deleted Effect 1	gender*mainparties *policypriorities	10.359	8	.241	3
1		gender*mainparties, gender*policypriorities, mainparties*policypriorities	10.359	8	.241	
	Deleted Effect 1	gender*mainparties	25.407	4	.000	2
	2	gender*policypriorities	42.475	2	.000	2
	3	mainparties*policypriorities	15.257	8	.054	2
2		gender*mainparties, gender*policypriorities	25.615	16	.060	
	Deleted Effect 1	gender*mainparties	30.270	4	.000	2
	2	gender*policypriorities	47.338	2	.000	2
3		gender*mainparties, gender*policypriorities	25.615	16	.060	

a. For 'Deleted Effect', this is the change in the Chi-Square after the effect is deleted from the model.

b. At each step, the effect with the largest significance level for the Likelihood Ratio Change is deleted, provided the significance level is larger than .050.

c. Statistics are displayed for the best model at each step after step 0.

Convergence Information^a

Generating Class	gender*mainparties, gender*policypriorities
Number of Iterations	0
Max. Difference between Observed and Fitted Marginals	.000
Convergence Criterion	.250

a. Statistics for the final model after Backward Elimination.

Cell Counts and Residuals

gender	mainparties	policypriorities	Observed		Expected		Residuals	Std. Residuals
			Count	%	Count	%		
Male	Conservative	Strongly agree/ agree	46.000	4.0%	57.450	5.0%	-11.450	-1.511
		Neutral	93.000	8.2%	87.596	7.7%	5.404	.577
		Disagree/strongly disagree	78.000	6.8%	71.954	6.3%	6.046	.713
	Labour	Strongly agree/ agree	67.000	5.9%	56.655	5.0%	10.345	1.374
		Neutral	73.000	6.4%	86.385	7.6%	-13.385	-1.440
		Disagree/strongly disagree	74.000	6.5%	70.959	6.2%	3.041	.361
	Liberal Democrat	Strongly agree/ agree	48.000	4.2%	52.419	4.6%	-4.419	-.610
		Neutral	88.000	7.7%	79.927	7.0%	8.073	.903
		Disagree/strongly disagree	62.000	5.4%	65.654	5.8%	-3.654	-.451
	Green	Strongly agree/ agree	16.000	1.4%	12.178	1.1%	3.822	1.095
		Neutral	20.000	1.8%	18.569	1.6%	1.431	.332
		Disagree/strongly disagree	10.000	.9%	15.253	1.3%	-5.253	-1.345
	All other parties	Strongly agree/ agree	25.000	2.2%	23.298	2.0%	1.702	.353
		Neutral	34.000	3.0%	35.523	3.1%	-1.523	-.256
		Disagree/strongly disagree	29.000	2.5%	29.180	2.6%	-.180	-.033
Female	Conservative	Strongly agree/ agree	46.000	4.0%	47.598	4.2%	-1.598	-.232
		Neutral	41.000	3.6%	36.317	3.2%	4.683	.777
		Disagree/strongly disagree	17.000	1.5%	20.085	1.8%	-3.085	-.688
	Labour	Strongly agree/ agree	32.000	2.8%	40.733	3.6%	-8.733	-1.368
		Neutral	31.000	2.7%	31.079	2.7%	-.079	-.014
		Disagree/strongly disagree	26.000	2.3%	17.188	1.5%	8.812	2.126
	Liberal Democrat	Strongly agree/ agree	51.000	4.5%	48.971	4.3%	2.029	.290
		Neutral	35.000	3.1%	37.365	3.3%	-2.365	-.387
		Disagree/strongly disagree	21.000	1.8%	20.664	1.8%	.336	.074
	Green	Strongly agree/ agree	31.000	2.7%	25.172	2.2%	5.828	1.162
		Neutral	19.000	1.7%	19.206	1.7%	-.206	-.047
		Disagree/strongly disagree	5.000	.4%	10.622	.9%	-5.622	-1.725
	All other parties	Strongly agree/ agree	13.000	1.1%	10.526	.9%	2.474	.762
		Neutral	6.000	.5%	8.032	.7%	-2.032	-.717
		Disagree/strongly disagree	4.000	.4%	4.442	.4%	-.442	-.210

Goodness-of-Fit Tests

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Likelihood Ratio	25.615	16	.060
Pearson	25.144	16	.067

Interview schedule

How were you recruited to stand: e.g? member of party asked me or friend...

Have you recruited other people to be candidates?

Who did you ask, friends, colleagues...

Is it easy to persuade people to stand?

What prevents people from standing?

What additional information would you have found useful as candidates or when deciding to whether or not to stand?

Would you have preferred to get this kind of information from the council or the party?

How do you think issues of under representation of women, BAME and young councillors should be addressed?

Does it matter if the councillors are men or women, young or old?

How do you think councils could better support councillors in their role as democratic representatives?

What could be done generally to make the role of being a councillor more attractive?

What could local authorities do to promote the role of councillors?

What could the political parties do to interest more people in standing?

Do women councillors make a difference to policy priorities?

Do women councillors make a difference to culture of the council?

Do women behave differently as representatives for their wards?

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